



THE SEVEN OWL URNS OF PERSIA.

I DREW THE WEAPON FROM MY POCKET AND PASSED IT TO EDWARDS.

[Page 229.]



*Being
Travellers'
Tales
of
Strange Perils.*

—+—
By
C. J. MANSFORD,
B.A.,
*Author of "Shafts
from an
Eastern Quiver," etc.*

IV.—THE SEVEN OWL URNS OF PERSIA.

ON the second evening, when we were assembled in the Anchor smoke-room once more, Wilson, the artist who has been mentioned previously, opened a satin-lined case and took from it something which he gave us to examine. It was made of silver and about seven inches in length, the width being about one-third of this. One end was crescent shaped, from which the silver was wrought gradually thinner, until the other extremity was reached, which was rounded and extremely sharp.

"I brought this blade of silver from Persia," Wilson began, taking it into his hands and holding it so that the light fell full upon it; "and when you hear what was the result of its discovery you will agree with me that I unexpectedly came across a curious treasure in obtaining it. Various conjectures have been made concerning this silver blade; indeed, a well-known authority on such things has declared it to be a coin of some remote period, large as it is, and has written a treatise upon it. However, it is not the silver blade nor its shape which concerns us, but rather the strange inscription upon it. You will notice," he continued, "that upon one side there are three curious signs which are said to be Sanscrit and wish the possessor of the silver blade good luck. On examining the other side an inscription is found, and this is in an entirely different language. I will explain how

first I got the silver blade, and then you shall hear what its discovery led to.

"I was sauntering idly through a Persian bazaar one day, when the cries of an excited throng suddenly broke upon my ears and I saw the bazaar keepers hastening forward to where a crowd had assembled. Wondering what had happened, I joined the throng and found a ragged picturesque-looking mendicant, with unkempt hair and a begging-gourd in his hand, involved in a quarrel with a stranger. The latter, although dressed in Persian attire, and wearing a red tasselled fez cap, was evidently an Englishman. He stood there with his hand on the hilt of the sword which hung in a jewelled scabbard by his side, and faced the mob.

"'Down with the infidel!' 'Slay the accursed Frank!' were some of the cries which I heard as, seeing the peril of his position, I forced my way, with many a malediction, through the crowd and reached the Englishman's side. No sooner did those surrounding him see that the man had someone to assist him, if necessary, than they ceased their hostile demonstrations, several of the bazaar keepers calling Allah to witness that they had only joined the throng to assist, and not to attack, the Englishman. The latter treated these protestations with scant courtesy; then, as we passed out of the bazaar together, he warmly thanked me for my interference.

"'I made a great mistake in quarrelling with that unwashed fellow,' he remarked

to me as we threaded our way through the narrow streets. 'The fact is, he is one of those so-called holy men met with in the East, who devote themselves to a life of fanaticism and idleness, being honoured and supported by their more simple countrymen. I flung him a coin as he held out the begging-gourd. He clutched at the coin, and as it was not sufficiently valuable according to his expectation, he demanded another. Not listening to his request I passed on, when he caught me by the arm and tried to force me to give him a second coin, accompanying his demand with a perfect torrent of abuse. I shook off his grasp, when he raised suddenly a cry as if hurt, and to those who ran to his release he told a yarn of a wanton attack which I had made upon him. It was just when I expected to have to fight my way out of the crowd that you most opportunely came up. I have lived in Persia for several years, being engaged in examining certain inscriptions which interest me and which I discover in many curious ways. However, come with me and I will tell you more where we are not likely to be overheard.' He took my arm, and we went on together, the bazaar-keepers of the narrow streets occasionally rising from the open raised niches, in which their goods were exposed for sale or barter, and salaaming, then resuming their positions and smoking vigorously from their long-stemmed pipes.

"Turning an abrupt corner, I saw to my astonishment the mendicant sud-

denly dart out from a narrow archway. He flung himself upon my companion and dragged the latter to the ground, then, drawing from his girdle a blade of silver, aimed a heavy blow at the prostrate man. I caught his descending arm, wrenched the weapon from his hand, and flinging him off, assisted the Englishman to rise. The mendicant darted away—then returned and coolly asked me to return his weapon.

"'You won't have the chance to attack another Englishman with it,' I said angrily; 'take yourself off and be thankful to escape so easily.' I placed the silver blade in my inner pocket and buttoned up my coat.

"'The Frank is a thief!' he said, holding out his brown paw for the blade. 'I am a holy man; to take anything from me will render you accursed for all time.'

"'I will chance that calamity,' I answered in Persian; 'but you won't get your weapon back, so you may as well leave us.' He saw that I was determined over the matter, when to my surprise he drew from his ragged garments a piece of yellow, stained linen, like a piece of mummy cloth, and unfolding it displayed a gold coin.

"'Give me the weapon and take this for it,' he said, holding out the coin. I saw my newly-found friend glance curiously at the coin, then he said to me in English, preventing the mendicant, by this precaution, from understanding his words:

"'On no account part with the weapon; depend upon it, the



"HE STOOD WITH HIS HAND ON THE HILT OF HIS SWORD."

article is valuable. The coin he has in his hand is not Persian at all; he has been excavating on his own account, I believe—keep the silver blade at all hazards.' He motioned me to follow, and we quickly made our way onward, the mendicant following at a little distance and whining for his lost treasure. When, however, the Englishman's abode was reached, the mendicant shook his fist at us threateningly, then went off, gesticulating violently and muttering to himself.

"The room into which Edwards, the Englishman, conducted me was fitted up in true Oriental fashion, and I saw that, judging from the sumptuous fittings of the apartment, Edwards was evidently a man of considerable wealth. The ceiling, which was lofty, was gilded, and from the centre of it hung down a crimson lamp, which was lit, since the light of day was carefully excluded. Round the room, on three sides, ran a divan of tempting softness, upon a part of which, at Edwards' invitation, I reclined, accepting one of the mouthpieces from the hookah which stood in the centre of the apartment, beneath the hanging lamp. The walls of the apartment testified to the owner's pursuits: inscriptions, temple reliefs, idols, cases of coins, urns, strings of whorls, fragments of strange pottery; several rust-encrusted weapons, including a finely-bossed shield, hung there in artistic confusion, while upon the richly-piled carpet stood a large earthen jar. The latter, I noticed, had been carefully riveted in several places, and was fully four feet wide, its height being probably six feet or more. I noticed this urn curiously, because it represented the goddess Athena, for, upon the neck of the jar was unmistakably carved the head of an owl; lower down were two breasts, while flowing over the oval surface of the jar was depicted a woman's hair, fancifully stained a bright colour, which for so

many ages had not faded. Edwards saw me studying the jar from where I reclined on the divan, and remarked:

"You see that my archæological researches have curious results sometimes; strange as are many of the objects around, they do not represent a fraction of what I have discovered during the ten years I have been in Persia. When I first found that great owl urn, I was disappointed, for I had expected to discover something within it, instead of which the urn was unfortunately empty. Whenever I come across a place suitable for excavations I purchase the land, usually at a small price, and set to work. Unlike most of those who are engaged in such researches, I work alone, not choosing to let everything I discover become known in this country. The Persians are rather difficult to deal with, and I expect, if they had any idea of the value of my treasures, some excuse would be found for rifling the place of what I have obtained after the most arduous labour. This is such a rich field for exploration that I have had some difficulty in keeping my secret; indeed, had it not been for the inestimable services you have providentially rendered me to-day, I should certainly not have invited you here. I was much astonished to see that gold coin in the mendicant's hand, for it shows me that some of the people about here are evidently becoming interested at last in the excavations I have made, and are apparently following suit, although in such a rough way that I don't suppose any great result is likely to come of their researches. The fact is, they don't know what to look for. By the way, will you let me see that silver blade which you took from the mendicant?"

"I drew the weapon from my pocket and passed it to Edwards. He examined it under the lamp. 'This is curious,' he remarked, catching sight of the inscrip-

9x47y0.40494.wnK.40494.y0LY0A.494H.KY4.
 4A0H9463Y.49.4A0H.742.Y473T.73W44H.0VW09390.
 04V.476W400V.X93493.00V.0934T.K9Y4.V0W4V0X9.
 40.446T40.476.4A0H.43.4V4.H.030043.9X.49404.Y4344.
 W4V4H.K494Y.490.493H.W09Y.0V.0.4X4.V4T4V0W40T
 H4H4X.943.T4Y4.O4T4H.44V4.V.T4H40T.T4H4V4J.Z4X494.
 H4.4094.494493.0K.0494.494.494.494.494.494.494.
 0393493.4904.493W4.0.4944X.H43.93W494V4K4.Y4940

tion. He went on examining it carefully, then, not being able to make the writing out in parts; he took out a magnifying-glass and observed minutely the silver blade, with its inscription. Still he was puzzled; then suddenly the secret dawned upon him.

"‘Why,’ he cried excitedly, ‘the inscription is in one language, but the letters with which it is written are those of another period and country!’

"Still Edwards went on reading the inscription, until I ventured to ask him what it was about. Forgetting, or not asking whether or not I understood its meaning, he read to me what you see upon the silver blade:—

"‘I have no doubt the words are interesting enough,’ I said, in a tone of slight annoyance; for my host had apparently paid little heed to me, and, indeed, seemed to be reading for his own edification. ‘It is unfortunate for me that I can’t understand a single word of it, however, not being acquainted with any other language besides Hindustani and Persian.’

"He nodded his head significantly.

"‘It is not surprising that you did not understand what is written on this blade; certainly neither of those languages would assist you. Before I translate it to you I want to ask you a question. Certain statements are made in this inscription, which, of course, is your property, since you secured the silver blade. What will you accept as your share of any treasure that this inscription may refer to?’

"‘A half of it, nothing less,’ I answered, watching his face, for I saw, that in some way, I had made a strange discovery. He dissented.

"‘You must put some money value upon your claim,’ he said. ‘I don’t believe you would find the inscription of the slightest value to you without my assistance; and, whatever is discovered, I want to keep from being placed upon the English market or consigned to a museum. I will offer you a cheque for any fair amount, on condition that what is found becomes mine, and mine solely. If we cannot agree, very well, try to turn the secret to some better advantage, but I don’t fancy you will. Having read what is written there, I can secure any treasure mentioned long before you discover where it is even located.’

"I saw that I was at a disadvantage and thought the matter out carefully.

"‘I will take five thousand pounds as the value of my share,’ I replied, which was far more than I expected he would pay.

"‘I promise you that sum provided that you will accept less should the treasure not be of twice that value,’ Edwards assented. This seemed perfectly reasonable and I at once agreed to his terms.

"‘The mendicant who possessed this silver blade little knew that, for over two years, I have been trying to find out a secret which the inscription unfathoms, and which, no doubt, he is completely ignorant of. The great urn here, which you see, is one of seven, and these were skilfully hidden centuries ago. Six of them merely have an inscription referring to the contents of the seventh. They



THE LOVELY ARATHA.

were placed at wide distances apart and I found this one—not the one containing the treasure of which the inscription speaks. Since finding the great urn, much of my attention has been given to searching for the others, but I have not found any more of them. If you will listen, I will endeavour to translate the inscription from the silver blade, and then we can make our plans.’ Without further comment, Edwards took up the silver blade again, which he had placed down, and read, as well as I can remember, the following translation of the inscription:—

"‘I am Hara, slave of the lovely Aratha. Know that Aratha was the fairest daughter of King Adosh. Unto Aratha, Adosh gave a diadem of gems, each gem worth more than all



"HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHERE THIS MOUNTAIN IS?"

the treasures of Meon, than all those of great Kirga. Now, the men of Ochrath assaulted our walls; Adosh they slew, yea, Adosh and his people, but Aratha fled to the mountain all white with snow, and this from here is four farsakhs. There Aratha died. When the sun is highest raise a staff on the land in the midst of the running water. As the line of shadow falls so is a ravine of grey rock. There are Aratha's gems, her diadem; there are Aratha's ashes. This I write, a remembrance of Aratha.'

"I remained silent for a few seconds when Edwards had finished the curious account of Aratha's diadem; and then, placing the silver blade in my pocket again, I asked:

"Have you any idea as to where this mountain white with snow is?"

"I know almost the spot where the silver blade was discovered by the mendicant as well," he answered; "for a time I carried on some excavations which I apparently abandoned too soon, probably just when I was on the verge of discovering this very silver blade, for certainly the spot is distant from a certain mountain base exactly sixteen miles, that is about eighteen from here, for the silver blade was found about two miles from here. I am the most inclined to this idea because during my excavations, this mendicant came several times and stood idly watch-

ing me. I had an idea that he tampered with my work after I left it one night; and when the search grew tedious, with practically no result, I abandoned the spot which he seems to have examined to better advantage. The mountain referred to is Demavend, for, not only does the river Lar wind on its way at the base of the mountain, but in its course lies a small island which is

the land in the midst of the running water.'

"I was persuaded that Edwards' view of the matter was correct, and immediately suggested that we should put it to the test.

"We certainly must lose no time in doing so," he answered. "I should not be surprised if the mendicant is in possession of the secret also; many such as he acquire knowledge far above that of the ordinary peasantry. As to the formality of buying the land, of course, in this case it will fortunately be unnecessary."

"Then let us start at once," I urged, for the search held out considerable attraction to me, my interest being considerably aroused. Edwards left me for a few minutes to order the necessary preparations to be made; then, when all was ready, I followed him to the entrance, where two sturdy Afghan ponies were held for us to mount, and on the front of their saddles were lashed the implements we required in our search.

"Edwards had mounted his pony, and I was just preparing to spring into the saddle, when, to my annoyance, the mendicant caught the steed I was to ride by the reins and held determinedly on, declaring that he would have the silver blade. One of Edwards' Persian servants dragged him away, when, getting free, he ran to my side and held up his begging-gourd.

"See!" he cried; "the gourd is filled with gold pieces; take them and return the silver blade; refuse this and Allah will surely bring destruction upon thee, thou Christian dog and infidel."

"A sudden thought occurred to me of getting rid of the mendicant. I stretched out my hand as if to take the gourd, and then, striking the fellow's arm, jerked the coins into the dusty road. Before he could clutch up his gold coins we spurred on our sturdy Afghans, and dashed across the plain beyond the village. Away we went, faster and still faster, over the sun-dried waste; then, after a ride of several miles, we left the arid plain, and, skirting a Persian village half

buried in verdant foliage, put our ponies at a torrent which barred the way, and then rode for the main stream of the Lar itself. So little time had we lost that we reached the base of the stupendous, snow-peaked mountain a little before mid-day, and Edwards, reining in his pony, pointed to a bare patch of tawny rock rising from the river bed.

"That is the island in search of which we came," he said, and, dismounting, we hobbled our ponies and forded the stream, which was only knee-deep just there. On reaching the rock, Edwards planted upon it a peeled wand of poplar, which was sufficiently long to cast a shadow to the opposite bank.

"The way lies there," I cried excitedly, when, up to the river bank, mounted on a superb white Arab stallion, whose sides were flecked with foam and dust bespattered, the mendicant, or santan, rode. Down from his steed he leaped; then stood watching us, an undisguised sneer upon his face.

"Christian dogs, ye search for Aratha's diadem in vain," he muttered fiercely; then, mounting his white stallion, rode slowly away.

"My surmise was correct," said Edwards reflectively, as we walked on, side



"CHRISTIAN DOGS, YE SEARCH FOR ARATHA'S DIADEM IN VAIN."

by side, leading our horses and carefully tracing out the way the shadow had fallen: "the santan has read the inscription!"

"It is all the more necessary for us to find the ravine without delay," I responded: "no doubt the fellow means mischief."

"Can't say for certain," Edwards answered laconically. "It won't be wise for him to interfere with us if he finds us at work, once we get to the ravine."

"We pushed steadily on, and leaving our ponies just at the base of the mountain, went slowly up the slope, keeping our way still as the shadow had indicated.

"Look!" cried Edwards; "surely the ravine is before us!" We ran forward excitedly, each with the pickaxe he carried and which my companion had been careful to provide. Jagged and grand, with many a loose, threatening boulder hanging above its sheer sides, the ravine ran for some distance towards the heart of the mountain where it suddenly ended in a precipitous face of rock, before which lay several huge boulders piled high before us. We climbed up, and, seizing the topmost, sent the great fragment of grey, volcanic rock down with a crash that reverberated through the ravine. High, high above us, the cloudless sky seeming to mingle azure with the white snow, which sparkled diamond-like on the summit, Demavend reared its hoary, majestic peak, and its seared and scarred slopes led down the bare, desolate cone, to where, ten thousand feet below, we toiled to cast the boulders lower yet. One after another we pushed the fragments down and then before us we saw a rude, natural arch leading the way we sought to find. With a coil of rope in one hand and his pickaxe in the other, Edwards advanced, a flaring torch lashed fast to his forehead, while I followed, my heart palpitating at the thought of the nearness of the treasure we came to seek.

"'The santon was wrong,' said Edwards, as we stood together surveying the place, for here I am convinced we shall find the treasure.'

"We found ourselves in what appeared to be a long gallery cut out of the solid rock, and we hurried forward eagerly—but found nothing to block our way as we had expected. Four times did Edwards renew the torch, cutting off portions of the rope he carried; yet still our way seemed to lie ahead. We began to weary at last of the interminable way and to think that, perhaps, the santon's foreboding would turn out to be true.

"For fully an hour we threaded the rocky passage, then Edwards suddenly stooped down and raised something from the stone floor. It was the end of a discarded torch!

"'The santon has been here before us,' I commented, as he held it for me to look at.

"'I think it proves the curious shape of this rocky passage,' he answered; 'for I am certain this is the remains of the first torch I used—the fact is the passage is constructed in the form of a very large circle. We must examine the wall if we are to get nearer to Aratha's treasure.'

"We set ourselves to the task of observing the inner wall, and, in a few minutes, found ourselves facing a great boulder loosely thrust into the wall. We wrenched it from its position with our pickaxes and then crept through the orifice—to discover a second passage as wide and lofty as the first. We determined to explore it, after having made a slight break in one of the stones at the right side, in order to test if that passage were circular also—which we found to be the case. Once more we found an orifice in the rocky wall, blocked by a boulder as before.

Overcoming the obstacle, we entered what appeared to be a circular chamber, the height of which was considerable, while the surrounding walls were of rounded blocks of stone fitting closely each to each. We tried the walls but they were evidently solid. We tapped the smooth floor, which was of polished stone and covered with a mass of partly-obliterated inscriptions, when, at the ring of Edwards' implement, one of the slabs sounded hollow. We worked our hardest and managed to prise up one end of the stone and then to slide it along the polished flooring. Edwards fastened the coil of rope about his waist



"I SWUNG OUT AT THE END OF THE ROPE."

and I lowered him into the hollow vault below. There he called out to me to lash one end of the rope to the block of stone and follow him. I swung out at the end of the rope and joined Edwards, who, with me, examined the walls of the lowest chamber. Into the vault-like apartment ran passages which apparently honey-combed the base of the great mountain; leading off, as it seemed, into various directions like the spokes of a wheel from the centre. Passing round the walls, which again were circular, we found a space between two radiating passages which was composed of small square-cut blocks of stone less regular than the rest of the wall. Edwards pointed it out.

"'Tear down the blocks of stone!' he cried, as now he held the torch, the flare of which fell strangely in that otherwise gloomy place.

"I raised my pickaxe and struck at the wall. Little by little one of the blocks was loosened, and, as I forced it out from its position, with one tremendous crash the whole stone facing came down.

"'Back, back!' cried Edwards, and, seizing me by the arm, he dragged me instantly away, as the vault resounded and shook with the awful thunder of the falling mass. For a minute we crouched against the opposite wall, trying to shut out from our ears the sound, and expecting that the huge blocks above our heads would fall with a thud and crush us.

"When the blocks of rock ceased to fall, we made our way to the spot we had left, and then I cried out to Edwards excitedly:

"'Look! look! The great urn and its treasures are ours!'

"Scrambling over the fallen débris, we stood close to a great hollow in the solid rock, and there, before us, was the urn with its great owl face, its human breasts, and its two great handles raised like the wings of a bird at its sides.

"'We cannot remove it from its position,' said Edwards, after we had made several ineffectual efforts to overturn the great owl urn. 'Break in the front of it!'

"I dealt the huge vase a blow with the pickaxe, which sent splinters and fragments scattering about the vault; then, removing a fractured piece of earthen jar which impeded me, and which was about a foot in width and length, I thrust my arm into the urn and groped about as Edwards held the torch near.

"My fingers closed on something resting at the bottom of the urn, and I drew it out. Under the flaring torch we examined it. I held in my hand what I subsequently learnt from Edwards was a funereal urn. It had a curious shape, being much like a globe, fitted with a great owl's beak as a handle, and supported by three claws carved in stone. We carefully overturned its contents upon a flat piece of stone, and, much as we expected it, we were certainly startled as the ashes of Aratha fell out in a little heap of dust before us!

"'The treasure!' cried Edwards blankly, as he ran his fingers through the human dust. *It was not there.*

"We flung ourselves down in despair almost, so keenly were we disappointed, and for some minutes neither of us spoke. Then it occurred to me that the mendicant had declared we should not be able to find the treasure. Had he tampered with the vase? It seemed an unlikely theory, and yet it accounted for the loss of the diadem. I saw Edwards rise from the ground and walk silently towards the vase, examining it carefully. He thrust his hand within as I had done, but could find nothing. He turned to me thoughtfully when he saw I had followed him.

"'I can't believe the treasure has disappeared in such an unaccountable way,' he remarked. 'My opinion is that the urn somehow conceals the gems.' He relapsed into silence again. Then suddenly seizing the pickaxe, he shattered the bottom part of the owl urn until he could remove the circular rim at the bottom of it from the orifice in which it was placed. The top part of the urn, being wider and fast held by the stonework, remained in its place when Edwards removed the fragments of the bottom portion. He bent over the place, and then turned towards me with a cry of surprise.

"'The diadem is here!' he exclaimed; and, holding the torch close, I saw the glittering object in his hands! It had been placed, not *in* the urn with Aratha's ashes, but *beneath* it.

"Of gold the diadem was. Across the head of the wearer it had passed fillet-shaped, half covering the forehead, and then hanging down at the sides in strings of precious stones; each threaded end had attached to it a minute golden owl idol. Diamonds were there; rubies catch-



"EDWARDS DREW A ROUGH PLAN."

ing the light of the torch, and flashing it back to us ruddier yet; emeralds, in size such as before I knew not of; pearls, white as those of Manaar, with the blush that wearing gives; mingled together, they hung glittering from their golden settings, and we grew almost frantic at the thought of their value, once they were brought out to the light of day.

"At last Edwards reluctantly ceased to look upon the diadem, and when he had carefully secured it in one of his capacious pockets, we turned to where the rope had been left hanging down into the vault. We had only advanced a few yards when my feet became entangled, and, looking down to see what was the hindrance, I saw almost in horror, as the consequences flashed across my brain, that the rope had been unfastened from above and flung down!

"The mendicant followed us,' Edwards cried almost in alarm, when he saw what had happened, 'and seeing us get into this vault he laid his plans accordingly.' I glanced far up to where the orifice had been through which we descended. It was closed. The santan had rolled into it the stone which we removed when we entered the final chamber.

"We must explore the passages lead-

ing out of here, that is all,' said Edwards, but there was little hope in the tone in which his words were conveyed. We entered one of the great stone ways, and endeavoured to follow it, hoping against hope to find an outlet. We came to some great intersecting passages and there we halted, completely at a loss which way to pursue.

"This maze of passages is disheartening,' I said to Edwards moodily. 'We shall never find our way out.'

"Edwards then drew a rough plan, on the rocky floor, of the base of the mountain and of the passages we had traversed; when this seemed to him to be to some extent correct, we made a final attempt to free ourselves from the maze of passages which kept us prisoners. We followed as well as we could the direction he had planned for us, and wandered on, in the very depths of the earth, as it seemed to us. The atmosphere was almost choking, at times the very torch itself refused to burn properly, and faded into a small dull flare that made the darkness and loneliness about us still more appalling. Morning came, and still we were immured as we dragged our limbs forward. At last we gave up the effort to save ourselves, and, stopping at a spot where a number of passages intersected, we fastened a torch upright between two fragments of fallen stone, and flinging ourselves beside it, lay there watching the smoke of the torch curl upwards. I must have sunk into an exhausted sleep, for I next remember Edwards shaking me to arouse me. Glancing up I saw upon his haggard face a look of intense excitement. One hand he rested on my shoulder, and with the forefinger of the other he pointed at the torch.

"The draught!' he cried. 'Look how the smoke floats one way!' I sat up and watched the smoke from the torch, then Edwards, grasping the latter, held it in turn at the entry of each of the intersecting passages. One by one he tested them. The flare of the torch rose straight as did the smoke at the first, at the second, even at the third passage. Holding the torch at the fourth passage a perceptible draught caught it; down the narrow way we ran, but had hardly advanced twenty paces when a sudden gust of air caught the half-burnt torch and extinguished it, leaving us in utter darkness. We groped along the walls with our hands, our one last hope in the breeze which blew

fresher and fresher still; then we saw the faint light of day stealing into the gloomy passage.

"'We are saved!' I cried, almost beside myself, as we took the remaining distance at a run, in spite of our weariness, and then emerged into the daylight at a spot close to where we had entered the mountain.

"'We have been lost in Demavend twenty hours,' Edwards said, as we made our way slowly to where our horses had been hobbled—they were gone!

"'There is no hope for it but to set out on foot,' I remarked when we had discovered our loss, but, on turning an abrupt shelf of rock, we came upon our own horses, the santon's white Arab and the mendicant himself, two others of his class being with him. The santon stared at us incredulously.

"'The Franks have escaped!' he muttered. 'Did they find Aratha's diadem?' For reply Edwards caught the miscreant by the throat, and shook him till he seemed in imminent danger of being choked.

"'You scoundrel,' cried Edwards. 'You flung the rope down and replaced the stone in order to destroy us!' I managed to get them apart, when suddenly, up from the valley of the Lar, where their goats'-hair tents dotted the plain, I saw a body of nomads riding, who had doubtless seen us and thought to turn the fray to their own advantage. The santon sprang upon his horse, and headed it to meet them, while his two companions seized our mounts and tried to prevent us from escaping. We dashed them aside, and getting upon our sturdy ponies, grasped the reins in one hand and the im-

plement in the other which each of us had taken into the mountain. The nomads, joined by the santon, spread out in a curved line so as to enclose us.

"'We must break through them,' said Edwards; and then, as we neared the horsemen, we turned our steeds' heads and rode straight at the centre. On we went, and before they understood our plan, we dashed through the astonished horsemen. Round they wheeled their steeds, and

bare-backed, clinging to the animals' manes, they hotly pursued us. Away we went, dashing onward, our ponies white with foam, and so exhausted ourselves that we could scarcely sit in the saddles. They followed us at a breakneck pace, the santon leading and urging them on with fanatical cries to spoil and slay the accursed Franks; but no sooner did we reach the first village than they turned about, dragging the santon from his horse, and having thus despoiled him, rode off with their booty."

"And so you got the diadem?" said Colonel Pleydell, when the artist had finished his story.

"Yes; and Edwards, who still possesses it, made my share of the treasure more proportionate than we had at first

arranged. I heard from him a year ago. The santon, he tells me, occasionally passes him with a scowl of hatred in the bazaar or in the narrow streets of the Persian village. As to Edwards himself, his enthusiasm for excavation has not in the least diminished. Probably, in the course of time, he will discover the rest; for, since our adventure together, I understand he has found two more of the seven owl urns."



"PASSES HIM WITH A SCOWL OF HATRED."

A Trip to Chicago and its World's Fair.

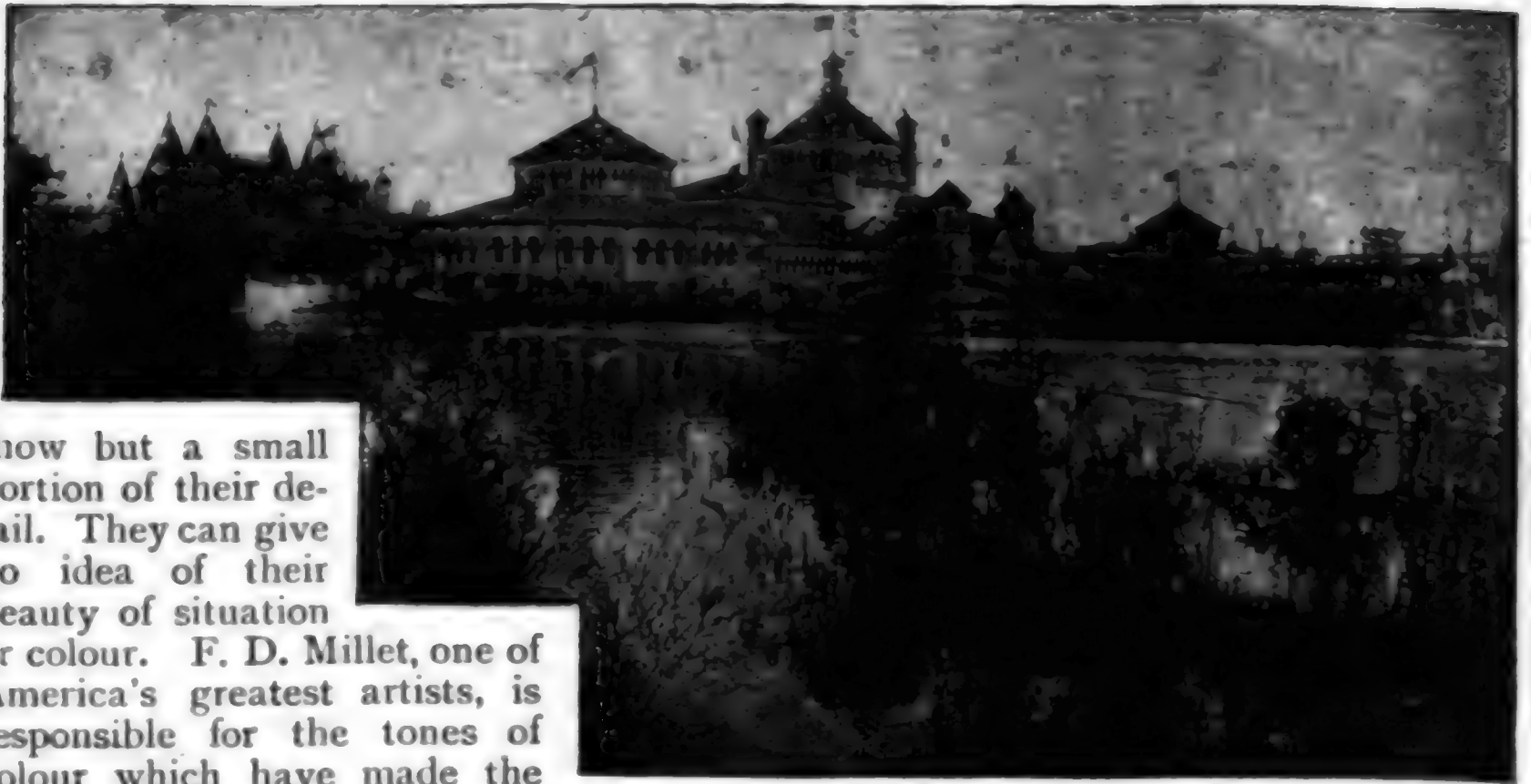
(Completed.)

CHICAGO needs no description. It is a mass of dwellings, factories, and warehouses stretching twenty miles along the shore of Lake Michigan. It owes its size to its geographical position: for it can serve the East, the South and the West with goods. It has no law beyond that of the dollars; no morality and no manners. Its chief citizen has been accused in print of being the nominee of the gamblers and the keepers of houses of ill-repute, and I do not know that he has ever denied the accusation. Its newspapers are filled with the vilest advertisements, so vile that in any other town in the States, any other town in the world, the newspapers inserting them would be seized and their proprietors imprisoned. The town is mad drunk with the lust of gold. Education, refinement—everything is sacrificed to the need of the hour—money. And, as a result, the only criterion of value is size. A building is praised, not for its beauty, but because it is the biggest. A woman is admired for her

chatter, her clothes, her audacity. A man's integrity is gauged by his bank balance. There is no trade, only speculation; no courage, only recklessness; no humanity, only sentiment. Chicago is said to lead the States. I hope and believe this to be untrue. But we cannot forget that it is to Chicago that has been allotted the honour of celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. And it has marked this date in the calendar by a failure. Yet the visitor to Chicago will not go away quite disheartened. If he has tramped through the miles of show-rooms and seen nothing new, nothing from which he will learn anything, he must, at least, carry away a remembrance of a *coup d'œil* architecturally unique. The buildings are unique. For they are vast, a great point in a building, and they are beautiful. The illustrations which accompany this will



MANUFACTURES BUILDING, FROM THE GRAND BASIN.



THE FISHERIES (WORLD'S FAIR).

show but a small portion of their detail. They can give no idea of their beauty of situation or colour. F. D. Millet, one of America's greatest artists, is responsible for the tones of colour which have made the Great White City an artistic success. To him we owe those delicate tints of orange and yellow which make the façades of the main buildings so beautiful.

The most striking view of the Fair is that obtained from the roof of the Manufactures Building, to which six lifts run perpetually—fare twenty-five cents! To the east stretches Lake Michigan, a boundless expanse, dotted with the unwieldy lake steamers. But South, West and North, lies the Fair at our feet; and away in the distance dirty Chicago stews in the tropical heat. From the South-west corner of the roof we see the dome of the Administration Building; the slender minarets mark Machinery Hall; and over the bridge to the left, our artist gives us a peep of the Agricultural Building. The

plateau in front of Administration Building is alive all day and evening with crowds listening to the band. I wish I could say a well-dressed crowd, but the Western farmer is not great upon dress; he and his children loaf about like half-starved paupers. The round circles, looking, at this height, like solitaire boards, are the Electrical Fountains. Then we walk down the narrow pathway and see the northern portion of the Fair unfold itself. Electricity Building is just below; beyond it the Mines Building, that dark mass is the Transportation Department, and the tower at the back is the fatal chimney of the Cold Storage Building, up which a reckless fire captain sent seventeen men to certain death. The spider-

like tower to the left is a part of an hotel run up a few hundred feet by the enterprising proprietor, that his guests may smoke a cigar and watch the Fair after dinner. Moving further northward, we see the Horticultural, with its dome of glass; and, at the back, the Ferris Wheel, two hundred and sixty feet high, stands in the middle of the Midway Plaisance; on each side are, or were, if they are not burnt down by this, hundreds of wooden hotels.

Then we reach the north-west corner; and the Women's Buildings and the State Houses come into view. Right under us, to



THE FIRST TRAIN RUN FROM NEW YORK (WORLD'S FAIR).



ON THE GRAND LAGOON (WORLD'S FAIR).

the right, is the U.S. Government Building; next it, with its quaint, red-tiled roofs, the Fisheries; at the back, the Art Galleries; to the left, on the lagoon bank, the Illinois State House, and, at the back, Chicago stretches to the horizon. The interior of the Manufactures is not beautiful, for the only nations that have taken any trouble with their exhibits are France and Germany. The vast height of the roof dwarfs everything, and no amount of gilt and ebony can make a glass-case, fifteen feet high,

look imposing when placed in a building two hundred and forty feet high. The armies of the Czar, as the guide-books tell us, could mobilise in the Manufactures Building. Of course it is the largest in the world. It would not be American if it were not. And truly its size is so vast that it becomes beautiful and magnificent from that quality alone.

There are some firms who have arranged pretty little conceits: Windsor Castle is shown in Sunlight Soap. One or two china and glass-ware firms have pretty booths, and the Goldsmiths' Alliance does not suffer by being placed close to Tiffany's magnificent shop; and the Patent Borax Company have a splendid show of "Californian" Borax Soap, which sounds as though this was carrying the war into the enemy's country. England does not shine; her exhibits are, most of



THE MACHINERY HALL (WORLD'S FAIR).



THE TRANSPORTATION BUILDING (WORLD'S FAIR).

them, stored away under galleries and in dark corners. There has been no attempt amongst our exhibitors to combine, and our system cannot compare with that of France, Germany or Russia, in which the State itself provides a suitable pavilion. England built Sir Henry Wood a solid brick cottage on the Lake side, which Americans fondly

imagine to be Elizabethan, but the money would have been better spent in arranging our artistic exhibits in the Manufactures Building. Sir Henry Wood was not popular with the exhibitors, and his action in closing Victoria House made him as much disliked in Chicago. Indeed, the administration of Victoria House almost amounted to a grave scandal. There is something radically wrong with the clique who for so many years have had the handling of our exhibitions. The whole essence of the World's Fair clusters round the Grand Basin, which at one end flows under a bridge in the peristyle. I was never weary of sitting in the shade of this peristyle—a more lovely vision of graceful architecture I never wish to see, the vast white columns, through which the lake shines like an amethyst, the colossal statues that break the sky-line, make a picture that will never be seen again. Here in the square little groups of farmers would sit eating their frugal lunches, or a few blue-coated guards lounge; for the rest it was deserted—a crowd would, indeed, have spoilt the illusion. The vast expanse, filled with people, would have destroyed the classical idea, the loneliness, the peace, with no noise but the splash of the waves as they dash against the sea-wall, all fitted with the dream of a dead past.

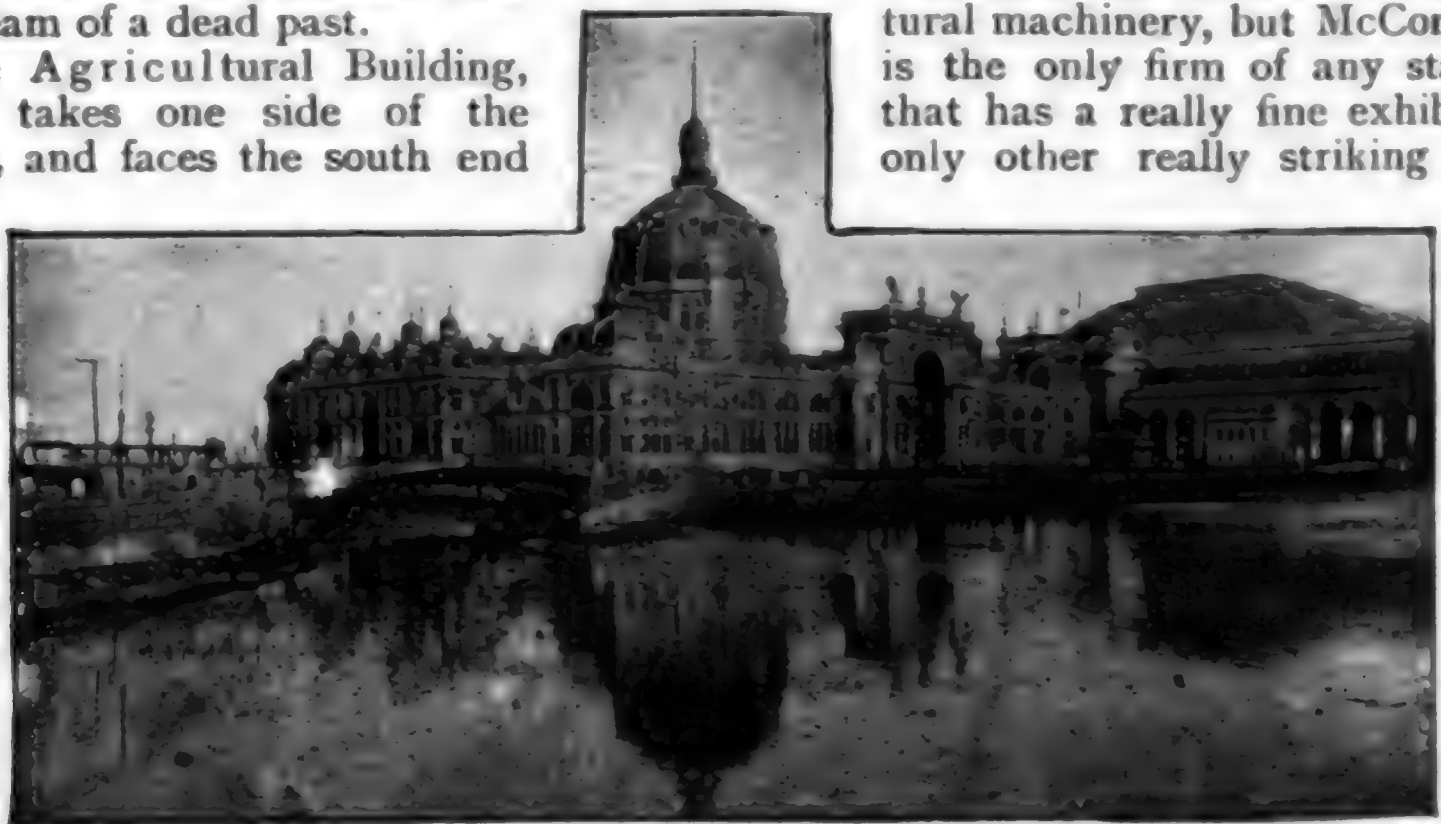
The Agricultural Building, which takes one side of the square, and faces the south end



THE ART GALLERY (WORLD'S FAIR).

of the Manufactures, is not so beautiful as the Machinery Hall, or, indeed, so imposing as the Administration, which faces the peristyle at the other end. But the sweep of terrace which surrounds it is broken by some superbly-modelled statues. The inside of the building is full of mediocrity. All the States have each their own little show, and each has gone into the same style of decoration. The result of a never-ending but broken line of corn and wheat-covered booths is poor. One such pavilion would have looked pretty; a score shows poverty of ideas. England is represented by a dozen firms. Crosse and Blackwell have quite the most artistic house; and as one sees their famous sauces and pickles upon every hotel table throughout the States, I was not surprised to see, for once, an English firm getting a good place with an exhibit worthy of it.

America is the home of agricultural machinery, but McCormick's is the only firm of any standing that has a really fine exhibit, the only other really striking stand



U.S. GOVERNMENT BUILDING (WORLD'S FAIR).

coming from the Canadian firm of Massey, Harris and Co. The Agricultural Hall has not anything like such a good show of implements as we may see any year at our Royal Shows. Mr. Whitman, a manufacturer, who, by the way, runs McCormick close for first honours, assured me that the annual St. Louis Fair beats the World's Fair hollow. But this is only another proof of how woefully the managers have failed in all except the mere buildings. The Machinery Hall lies just across the Lagoon, and here America has sent a really remarkable show of wood-working machinery. Firms like the Fay and Egan Co., Greenlees and others certainly lead us in this. England is represented by Platt, of Oldham, who has the only fine stand in the English section, with the exception of Joseph Baker and Sons and Galloway's. The rest of the English machinery is beneath notice; most of the space allotted to England is actually unoccupied.

The Electrical building is the one alone of all the palaces in Jackson Park which is more beautiful inside than out. The pavilions of the various electric companies—the General, the Westinghouse and the Bell Telephone—all vie with each other. The Western Electric Co. is brave with many coloured devices, at which a crowd gapes day and night as they flash out into divers colours. But in electricity, as in all the other departments, there is nothing new. Here one looks for novelties, but the only thing approaching a novelty is a small display of electrical welding. The Mines Building, ugly from the outside, has some interesting State exhibits, and the De Beers Co. allow us to see how the blue ground is washed, the diamonds found, cut and polished. A walk through the Mines Building gives one the somewhat erroneous idea that all the States in the Union team



THE MINES BUILDING (WORLD'S FAIR).

with every kind of mineral. Montana has sent a solid silver life-size statue of Ada Rehan, which may be worth something as bullion, but which, from an artistic point of view, is worse than worthless.

The Transportation Hall is unique in more ways than one. It is the only coloured building in the grounds, and its main entrance, a gilded arch of Byzantine design, is beautiful. The walls are coloured and ornamented with frescoes of angels. The exhibits are delightful. Complete trains of New York Central, Canadian Pacific and Pennsylvania afford endless fun to all. We walk through them, one after the other, and then peer up at the magnificent London and North-Western Railway exhibit. And when we tire of trains, we can go over the full-size model of a section of the *Paris*, that queen of ships, which stretches right up into the roof. There is a completeness about the Transportation department which attracts, and although there is no sensational exhibit,

the mere fact of being able to see half-a-dozen complete trains all together is, in its way, unique. The Women's Building has been more written about than any other portion of the Fair, and deserves less praise than any. The building is in itself somewhat ill-proportioned, and its exhibits are not worthy of women's work. Here again we get a mass of detail which exhausts our patience. Yet the building has attracted much notice, and the Press has



EXHIBIT OF MOORE BROTHERS, STAFFORDSHIRE (WORLD'S FAIR).

given far too much space to the chatter of the ladies who form the Committee, and who are what is known in the States as *cranks*. The crank is one of the institutions of America. We have them in England, but they are judged by a proper standard and ignored. Americans have no sense of proportion. Bulk they honestly admire, and the man or woman who fills the public ear the most is rated highest. So the crank flourishes and the Women's Building is her paradise.

The Art Galleries are vast and filled with pictures of all nations, and it is an art education in itself to walk through them. But I am sorry to say that England is behindhand here as elsewhere. Her galleries are ill-lighted and in an awkward place; the pictures do not compare well with those of France. The Loan collection is simply superb, and whatever may be said as to the lack of art in the States, it cannot be denied that the American millionaire has been lucky in hiring men to buy pictures for him. In the Loan collection there is not one bad or doubtful picture—a great thing to say. The sensation of the galleries is the "Dying Gladiator," by Professor Trentanove—a really fine piece of sculpture. The greater portion of the sculpture is mediocre, but the Americans love marble statues. The crowd that always fills the Art Galleries, even when the rest of the grounds are empty, deceives one into the idea that one day the Americans will understand art.

The northern façade of the Art Galleries faces the broad avenue of State Houses. Nearly every state in the union has built itself a little pleasure house in which it entertains, and which forms a club house for the inhabitants of the State who come to the Fair. The houses are almost all pretty and characteristic, and some are almost beautiful. Michigan is quaint and California the most beautiful. Some, like Washington, devote themselves entirely to advertising the productions of their State: these are the least interesting—one has too much of this sort of

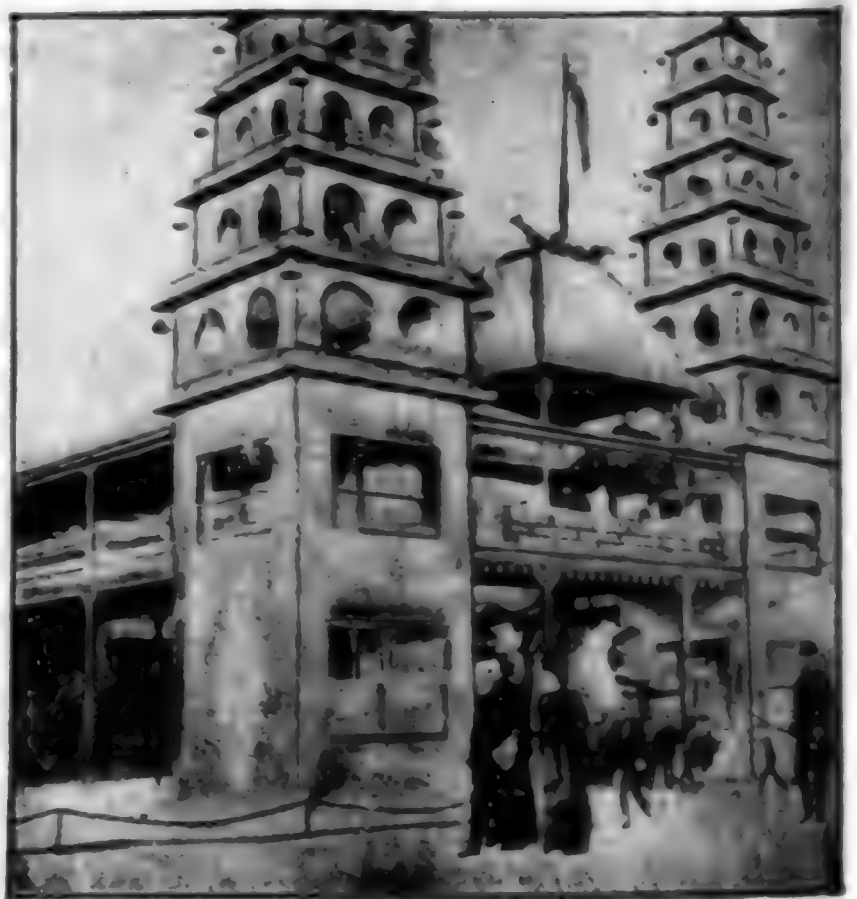


STREET OF STATE HOUSES (WORLD'S FAIR).

thing at the Fair. The most luxurious are the club houses of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Kentucky.

The Midway Plaisance I have left to the last, because, perhaps, it is the first thing visitors go to see, and is indeed the one thing worth seeing at the Fair. It is an idea enlarged from the Paris Exhibition. Every nation that can claim any idiosyncrasy has its own village. Egypt, Turkey, Algeria, Dahomey,

Java, Cairo and Constantinople are there. The South Sea Islanders and the Persian dancing girl are there without any restriction as to morals, dress or behaviour. The exhibitors complain that forty thousand people a-day flock to the Midway and stay there, to the detriment of their sales. I am not surprised. The long lane, in the centre of which the huge Ferris Wheel gyrates slowly, is the brightest, naughtiest spot in all Chicago. The pretty little Javanese girls, dressed in a pocket handkerchief, dance, flirt and smoke their little wood cigarettes on one side; on the other the dusky beauties from the South Sea shake their cowries and squat on their haunches to the amusement of hundreds. Dahomey dam-



CHINESE JOSS HOUSE (WORLD'S FAIR).

sels dance; Turkish, or rather Armenians, move voluptuously to their sad music. You may sip Persian tisane and chat with a lady in silk knickerbockers, who seems to know her Paris better than Ispahan; or you may ride down Cairo Street on a camel, and be deposited inside a Cairene theatre, in which the famous *danse de ventre* is in full swing. All the fun of the fair! and all America laughs, and jokes the strange beauties from far-off lands. In the Midway you may get cheap and good lager beer in a real German village, or dine *en prince* in old Vienna; you may eat a kabob in Turkey or a sauerkraut in Germany. Everywhere pretty girls, gay costumes and, above all, the entire absence of glass cases, labels, figures and the hundred and one insidious means of education the Yankee loves so well.

I have said little about the side shows, but there are many. The loveliest is the Convent of La Rabida, the most picturesque are the Caravels, the quaintest are the Esquimaux, and the most curious are the Cave Dwellers.

Krupp has spent two hundred thousand pounds upon an exhibit, which is certainly not worth the money; there is a Boot and Shoe Pavilion; anthropology has its home; Indians, civilised and uncivilised; a real whaler—the good ship, *Progress*—floats upon the lagoon. Every cocoa man has his own show, and the vast building of the Horticultural Department is at once an everlasting flower-show and a museum of fruit and wines.

There are restaurants everywhere, all equally bad and equally dear; Rector's, where you can sup off a broiled live lobster, is the best; a so-called Polish place, the worst. On the lake is a battle-ship, built in stone, amazingly like the real article. On the lagoons are electric launches, gondolas and boats by the hundred.

But the place is too big, it lacks definiteness. In trying to do everything well, they have succeeded in doing nothing well. Half the show would have attracted just as many people, and been far more interesting. The

Fisheries building is no better than many of our local aquaria, and its exhibits not worthy of the magnificent and artistic palace they are lodged in. The place is so vast that we must perforce travel from one end to the other by rail! One has quite enough of railway travel in the States without wanting more at the World's Fair.



THE VICTORIA HOUSE (WORLD'S FAIR).

Vast the place is, beautiful the buildings beyond compare, but the entire absence of everything of real interest, the inartistic jumble of everything, the multitude of interests, make the place, as a whole, a failure—at any rate, to those, who have seen other exhibitions, which, if smaller, have, at any rate, been artistic and compact. The craving for mere size, apart from any other quality, is responsible for the failure of the World's Fair.

And with regard to this same failure, a few words about the financial aspect of the World's Fair may be of interest, especially as I am not aware that any one has ever stated accurately how much the mere buildings cost, or how much the fair costs per diem. I have it upon the authority of one of the officials in the architect's office that the buildings alone cost over 40,000,000 of dollars. The figures given out in the official guides are but 19,000,000 of dollars! The 40,000,000



THE JAVANESE QUARTER (WORLD'S FAIR).

did not include any decoration, only the actual buildings; the laying out of the grounds, the expenses of advertising, the cost of keeping up the fair (20,000 dollars a day), are none of them included. The whole expense was indeed so vast, so utterly beyond what anyone had ever imagined, that one of those behind the financial scenes assured me that a paying attendance of 240,000 people a day would only just suffice to pay expenses. Now, the actual attendance, averaging good weeks with bad, cannot have been more than 80,000 a day, and I should not be at all surprised to find that it is under 70,000. The figures published each day in the Chicago papers as official are palpably wrong. Indeed, an official connected with the admissions department, when I expressed a doubt as to the accuracy of the official attendance on one day (175,000), laughed and said, "Nearer 40,000." Free admissions amount to 35,000 a day; and those upon bad days are counted in. All the figures given officially are quite untrustworthy. It must never be forgotten that the World's Fair is entirely a private enterprise, and those in charge laugh at the idea of letting the public know too much. Every effort was made to make the failure appear a success, and for some months the Finance Committee had a terrible time. No wages were paid, the contractors were pressing

for their long overdue accounts, and, in fact, in a law suit in which the World's Fair Company engaged, the Company's counsel stated in open court that, unless the case was given in his favour, his clients would be quite unable to keep the fair open. Americans are but children—sanguine, boastful, full of the pride of the youth from school, who thinks he knows everything, and, like children, utterly unbusiness-like. The Chicagoans were delighted with the idea of astounding the whole world; they plunged gaily into a needless expenditure, which will bring, in a year or two, wide-spread ruin upon Chicago. This city, as soon as the hundreds of thousands attracted by the hope of employment at the fair have left it, will be a city only half inhabited. The miles of villas will be empty, the hundreds of hotels will tumble into ruin, and the grass will again grow over the broad avenues that now cut up the prairie. Two years ago a block upon Lake Avenue, seven miles from the city, sold for 5,000 dollars; a year ago a tenth portion sold for 65,000 dollars; a year hence the whole block will be worth, perhaps, 2,000 dollars. Gambling like this is unique, and can only have one end—collapse. The same kind of thing has been going on in every State in the Union for some years. In Chicago we see the highest point of recklessness yet touched.

RAYMOND RADCLYFFE.



Author of "Proud Maisie,"
 "Cressida," "In a Cathedral Close," "The
 House by the Scar," "Elizabeth's For-
 tune," "Sundorne," etc.

DR. PAUL CLAY, aged five-and-twenty, assisted a general practitioner at Wroxbury. His duties, which were elementary and dry, had not rid him of certain Quixotic, visionary, bad habits of mind. Paul physicked servants and old women, bandaged cuts and sprains, read Shelley and George Meredith late at nights, and worshipped a divinity in Mrs. March Loraine, a dramatic star of magnitude.

The English bent is to angel, not devil-worship. Serena Loraine might play Lucretia Borgia—you could never forget what a very nice person she herself must be. In looks, a grand creature, making her fellow-actresses look like her dolls; she combined melting sweetness and swans'-downy, soft delicacy with imposing dignity. No world's wonder as an actress, at least she never broke the spell her beauty laid. It was foolish to try and disentangle what she owed to art and what to nature, who cast her in the likeness of the ideals of your dreams, and bid you dream and be thankful. A town-bred medical student, fretted by love of the beautiful, Paul owed her the best moments of his life: evenings in the pit of a London theatre, when that incomparable trio of

souls, Shakespeare, Mrs. March Loraine and Paul Clay met in agreeable communion.

Mrs. Loraine was announced to play at Wroxbury, and Paul went dispensing drugs in sublime anticipation of resuming touch, with rapture, in the sixpenny gallery. The day came, and Dr. Reed, his principal, was called into the country. Chained to the surgery, Paul sat cursing people and things, when a message ar-



"DR. REED WANTED AT ONCE."

rived from the Raven Hotel: "Mrs. March Loraine taken very ill: Dr. Reed wanted at once."

Paul, who was plain, stood up a good-looking man. Animation kindled his small, pale eyes, dignified his square stature, relieved the hard outlines of his impassive features. He flew.

The divine Serena had had a severe chill. Though suffering, she had lost neither self-command nor regard for picturesque appearance, propped and pillowed amid clouds of white cashmere and lace. Her dismay, at the sight of Paul's ruddy, inexperienced countenance, instead of the expected greybeard's, was unreserved; but his tremendous gravity, the self-importance, born of responsibilities so precious, told. She let him prescribe, and

infatuated servant. She quite understood; and her attitude, good-humouredly deprecating, not slighting his votive enthusiasm, was perfect. The richer by a stall for her eight nights at Wroxbury, and her card, which would admit him behind the scenes, Paul did not care if he died next week, when this was over. Resuming the medical man at the last moment, he said urgently:

"You will not drop the treatment for a few days yet. I have given directions to the maid."

"What maid?"

"Your maid, Eliza."

She answered with a peal of laughter.

"Eliza! why, she's my daughter!"

Paul now wanted to die on the spot. Eliza coming in, was instantly informed of his blunder. But she seemed too deficient in intellect to take offence. Her mother continued:

"My real maid walked out of the house just as we began to pack for this tour. It was too late to find another; and, really, Eliza suits me so well, I've hardly missed her," she concluded, angelically.

That Mrs. March Loraine, who had married at nineteen and owned to seven-and-thirty, should have a grown-up daughter, was no shock to Paul. But he felt positively angry with this frumpish,

old-maidish person of seventeen for so belying her maternal origin. Hard on the mother, too—a thankless reminder of her luckless marriage. She and the gentleman whose name she bore had parted long ago by mutual consent. But no public scandal had ever fastened on her name; a rare recognition of public service.

II.

THEN came for Paul three entrancing evenings in the stalls, with unforgettable interludes in the dust-ridden, chaotic-looking *coulisses*. Three new metamorphoses of his divinity ravished his imagination, and the approach to her in her aboriginal character was more precious than all. Her racy speech, ready tact and womanly charm held you with a



"WHY, SHE'S MY DAUGHTER!"

took his promise that she should soon be well. The dull-looking young woman, Eliza, who waited on her, seemed docile enough, but Paul stayed directing—assisting—till the symptoms abated, and remained within call all night. Eliza was not to leave her mistress for a moment, and to summon him in divers contingencies, none of which occurred. The morrow he spent fluctuating between the surgery and the Raven, to satisfy himself that his rapidly-mending patient got the sedulous nursing which was all she needed now. Dr. Reed returned before night, but next morning Mrs. Loraine, nearly cured, and going to act to-morrow, sent for Paul, to make a happy man of him, by saying, "Thank you," for his special care. No need for him to profess himself her most

benign fascination. And there were dolts who said beauty was her only gift! Paul hugged the delight of superior knowledge.

Detained the fourth night, he arrived late, and taking the stage entrance, and seeing Mrs. Loraine's dressing-room door ajar, tapped and looked in. Eliza sat there alone, bolt upright, sleeping with her eyes open. Paul nearly laughed as she came walking towards him like a galvanised puppet. "This chair," she muttered; "I've moved the glass—the light's better—see?" Waking up, "Oh, I thought it was mamma," she said drowsily, and sat down, nodding again already.

"Ought I to shake her?" thought Paul, concerned for the artiste, who had to change rapidly into bridal costume during a brief exit.

The next moment she entered like an electrical disturbance, filling the room with flurry and distressing excitement. Paul (of whom she took no more heed than of his umbrella) half expected the stir to spread to the furniture, as at a *séance*. Eliza, broad awake now, her matter-of-fact calm unbroken, had got her into the chair before the glass, and whipped off her gloves instantaneously.

"Shoes next," she said, kneeling. The white satin pair were ready to hand; and almost in the same breath she was deftly removing the jewelled plume, and replacing the pink brocade over-dress with the white bridal robe. Mounting on a chair, she adjusted the myrtle wreath and lace veil. Then Mrs. Loraine sailed out, a bride for Apollo, Eliza after her, holding a glass of raspberry vinegar for her mother, who felt hoarse to-night, to sip between whiles.

Paul watched the play's end from the



ELIZA.

opposite wing. A minor actor, whom he knew, stood by.

"I say, do look at Eliza," whispered this stager. "Did you ever see such a beastly untidy girl in your life? Gaping boots, stockings down at heel, and a set face like a door knocker. Why do they make them as plain as that? Or why don't they drown them like kittens?" he playfully suggested.

"What's singular to me is," confessed Paul, "that her mother's daughter should be so—so stupid."

"Oh, as to that, it's the devil's own drudge she is," returned the other. "Perhaps she's more stupefied than stupid. Precious little beauty-sleep that girl ever got. I've seen her stick pins into herself to keep awake. Her mother don't leave her time to wash her hands."

"Oh, come," said Paul, chafing; "Mrs.

Loraine lost her maid suddenly. Her daughter helps her, of course."

"She's always losing maids. Hers drop off like hairpins. It's four years now she's had Eliza to fall back on. Ah, my lady Serena's helps have a lively time, I promise you. But I do believe that girl's made of indiarubber; she can keep on her feet for thirty-six hours at a stretch. And they say women are weaker than men."

So ran the gossip. Eliza got her ugly name from a serious cook, who had her christened when she was two years old, her mother being always too busy to see about it. Her education was below the Infant Board School standard. But from twelve or thirteen she had been found increasingly useful in a household, frequently pressed for money, and where nobody else stayed, till Mrs. Loraine, whom the world praised for keeping this dummy of

a daughter about her, could hardly get on from one night's work to another without Eliza to minister to her needs.

That was the race week at Wroxbury. After the play a live duke and suite came to compliment Mrs. Loraine. Paul, from a respectful distance, admired the dignity and grace with which she let them escort her to her carriage, and drove off with the second actress and several big bouquets. He stopped to light his cigar, and saw Eliza come out, belated, somehow, or forgotten.

"How are you going home?" he said. There were no cabs left.

"Walk," said Eliza. "It's only a step."

"It's my way," said Paul. "Let me carry that heavy bag."

This she stoutly declined.

"Aren't you dead tired to-night?" he asked, as they went.

"I don't know," said Eliza. Then, reminded that she had been caught napping. "But it went all right—that change, quicker than when the dresser does it—mamma can't bear to be touched by her, you know."

"Your mamma thinks you left with the first party. Won't she be very anxious?"

"About the bag? She knows I'd have my hands cut off sooner than let it go out of them, or she'd not trust it to me, she says."

A gas-lamp flashed on her face. Paul regarded it professionally.

"If you're not tired, you're hungry," he said oddly. "Don't forget supper to-night."

"If mamma is ready, I must help her to bed. Then she likes me to hold her hand till she falls asleep; there are things to fold up and put away, and it gets too late to be hungry."

Paul put many questions. They always travelled at night, Eliza told him. Did she sleep in the train? Never; but mamma rested beautifully. She told him other things, taking for granted the momentous interest of every jot and tittle of her famous parent's concerns. Oh, one had to be always watching; servants were so careless. Mamma went faint if she saw a black beetle; a fly in the coffee spoilt her appetite for the day; a button off her glove, a rent in her lace put her into a fever; and, if she was hurried, she lost her head altogether. Certainly, Mrs. Loraine's caretakers had a lively time. Paul, who considered himself a

laborious student, perceived that he led a life of luxurious ease by comparison.

"I shall tell your mother you want a holiday," he said, jokingly.

"I'm to have one," said Eliza, seriously. "Wednesday, the Cup afternoon; no performance that night. Mamma is going to the races."

"And takes you with her?"

"Me?" Eliza stared. "I'm to spend the whole day at Coppin's farm. He was mamma's servant five years, and he's coming at ten to fetch me in the spring cart. I've never seen a real farm in my life. Oh, how late." A clock had struck. "Mamma will be——"

And Eliza tumbled in at the Raven, forgetting to say good-night. Paul walked home, musing.

Mrs. Loraine's daughter was neglected and overworked. Small blame to Mrs. Loraine. The tender mercies of the public are cruel; and the public servant wants all the help he can get, to keep his place, if it is a high one. Here was a rare creature that belonged to the community, not the individual. Her mission was not to tuck up her little girls in their cots and chaperon them when they grew up, but to delight, refresh and elevate mankind, Paul Clay for one, by her inimitable powers. Her lamp must shine undimmed. Nobody minded about the oil that fed it, except that it should never run short. And Elizas were sufficiently plentiful in the community. If she broke down or died, no man would go wifeless or childless for that, nor anybody be very sorry. She might be sorry for herself; but she seemed to comprehend that nothing could possibly befall her that would have such consequence as a crease in her mother's gown, or the loss of one of those bright hairs. It was all in the natural order, with which it is misdirected energy to quarrel, as Paul was doing now.

III.

COPPIN, ex-servant and perfect treasure to Mrs. March Loraine, had left her to take a wife and a farm four miles from Wroxbury, where he thrived and sent his late mistress presents of dairy produce. Paul was attending his little boy for bronchitis. Choosing the Cup afternoon for a round of rural visits, he walked in upon Coppin, his wife and two pretty children at tea, in the farm-kitchen, with their young guest, Eliza.

Paul hardly knew her again. A rose-coloured apron of Mrs. Coppin's, far more becoming than the stuff dress it protected, covered her from head to foot. That short drive had lifted her into a new life, a new creature. Some traces of colour enlivened her leaden complexion; there was sparkle in her eyes, her languid limbs were quickened. "Coppin says she nearly threw herself out of the cart in her excitement," the wife told Paul, amused, "at quite common country sights on the road. It's new for her, I suppose." She had done half the churning, watched the loading of the hay-waggon, the milking of the red kine, fed the turkeys, wondering at their unlikeness to those plucked carcasses which were all that she knew of turkeys. The bees swarmed on a bough, and she beheld the growth of the wondrous honeycomb as a miracle going on in an oak tree. The tame rabbits in the hutch; the lamed chicken snuggling in a flannelled basket; all these living, palpitating things were to her objects of love at first sight. To the wholesome farm life into which she had dropped, with its simple activities, direct and visible uses, she took like a nestling swallow to the sheltering eaves.

Paul stayed for a cup of tea and a chat, then proceeded to a distant cottage, the wiser by the discovery that Eliza was a highly interesting study. That girl had more than common possibilities in her of womanly pleasantness and worth, kept under by the artificial stage atmosphere wherein she lived and moved, but had no being of her own. Some one ought really to take her away from among the paint and rouge-pots, the paste jewels and glitter brighter than gold, the canvas woods and rocks, the kingdom of exquisite fallacies and enchanting make-believe, where she was such a nobody you never thought she could have an element of her own.

At dusk, as Paul passed the farm in returning, Coppin came out to meet him in diffident perplexity. A neighbour had sent for him on urgent business, and there was Miss Eliza to be driven back to Wroxbury.

"I thought, as you know them so well, sir, maybe you wouldn't mind a driving of her over. I'd fetch the trap from the Raven when I come in to market to-morrow."

Paul made no objection. Coppin went to put in the horse; Paul into



THERE WAS MISS ELIZA TO BE DRIVEN HOME.

the kitchen, where Eliza sat with the fractious little sick boy on her knee, having just succeeded in coaxing a smile. She looked up at Paul and smiled too, a happy little smile, and he stopped dead, struck by the oddest thing—a flash of resemblance to her mother.

He asked her leave to drive her home. The distressing fact conveyed, that it was time to go, was all Eliza took in. She laid her head on the table and burst out crying. Mrs. Coppin looked at Paul as if *he* could help! The children opened their round eyes wider. Eliza wept on regardless, as if she would die. Presently sounds of wheels and uproarious merriment swept by along the high road.

"Going home from the races," Paul observed.

Eliza lifted her head, her tears stanching; she got her things, took subdued leave of her hosts, shrinking back quickly into her colourless, habitual self. So they drove through the dark, leafy lanes.

"How would you like to live in the country?" asked Paul, at length.

"Mamma hates the country—says no one can live there," she replied.

"But you—you yourself."

Eliza hesitated. That her liking should be a factor in events was beyond the stretch of her imagination.

"After all," said Paul, whose character studies were sometimes pushed too far, "girls don't stay with their mothers for ever." He leaned a little towards her in the dusk, but could not see if her colour changed.

"You stay where you are wanted," said Eliza dimly, "I suppose."

Accepting this theme, Paul was going to point out supposable variations, when the horse stumbled, a hint to him to be careful.

IV.

MRS. MARCH LORAINÉ'S great success at Wroxbury led to her re-engagement for six nights more in November, on her return from tour. Once again Paul, when practice was slack, might dwell on sweet coming visions of Serena at her divinest—as the stately Hermione, the light-footed Perdita, the inimitable Peg Woffington. Entrancing shapes always, but always now with the attendant shadow of her dowdy, passive, unconsidered but indispensable daughter, moving him to exasperation with a scheme of things which ordains that valuable people, to keep going, must spoil a few lives in the operation. Perhaps he would have owned that it was all right, but for that glimpse of Eliza transmogrified, playing housewife and little mother at the farm.

The divine Serena was not unkind. Whirled along in the torrent of business and pleasure, indistinguishable in art-lives, she had no time for the domestic emotions. Eliza did for a crutch, and thus justified a presence otherwise unimportant or irksome. Did it matter to a living soul that she was dressed anyhow, her hair cropped short to save time in the mornings; her stockings left undarned sooner than keep mamma waiting; her growth stunted and health shaken by

standing for long hours, want of fresh air and sleep. It mattered intensely to many people that Mrs. March Loraine should perfectly fulfil royal expectations. But her artistic throne was distressingly shaky. So clever, so successful, she was yet, in nine matters out of ten, the sport of circumstance. Mismanaging every private affair, from her marriage onwards; earning fancy salaries, yet forced to borrow; her agents defrauded her, her investments failed, her theatrical ventures collapsed, her bills and her servants were left unpaid; her surroundings half luxury, half squalor—costly carpets and no one to sweep them, champagne suppers to-day, empty board to-morrow, and over-cultivated nerves upon which the least adverse breath told unfavourably.

Upon her return to Wroxbury, Paul found the stage-door still open to him, but amateurs of consequence intervened to engross the muse. Paul kept aloof and talked to Eliza. She looked very ill. She had had a sort of fever, contracted in insanitary dressing-rooms, and the effects stuck. She needed badly a month's rest at the sea-side, but mamma wanted her worse than ever just now. She had tried three new maids; but one drank, another stole, the third left in a huff. Eliza had never been off duty for a day. With an arduous London winter season and a six weeks' rush to America in the spring, before her, Serena, whose nervous equilibrium was always precarious, leaned with inexorable weight upon the human prop under her hand. Of this prop Paul found himself plotting to deprive her.

Quixotic by disposition, Paul, having lived too much alone, had implicit confidence in the wisdom of his inspirations. Perhaps, he would never have become a sensible man till he had done some odd thing. His present original intention was deliberately taken and approved. A strange thing that had come about quite naturally. The un hoped for approach to his divinity had been the only ideal page in his life. His exaltation had thrown a halo over his compassionate sympathy for this girl-victim of circumstance, and of the Serena Loraine mania, to which he had succumbed. The magnanimity of it tempted him to take her away from this stage-



LAI D HER HEAD ON THE TABLE AND BURST OUT CRYING.

slavery. Chiefly to save her life, of course (Paul would have staked his professional reputation, had it existed, that the danger was imminent). But she had attractive powers congenial activity would bring out. Had he not seen her conjuring little Bobby Coppin into good behaviour? Eliza was somebody then.

Mrs. Loraine never answered Paul's note, petitioning for an interview; and he surprised her one morning, too busy letter-writing to attend to him. Paul had to state his errand in plain English. Then, indeed, she dropped her pen.

"What?" the rich, resonant voice rang out with impressive emphasis, "Eliza? You propose to me for *my daughter*? What *absurd* creatures men are! Why, the child's *much* too young—barely seventeen; and if there's one thing I *hate* it's long engagements."

Paul explained that it was part of his plan to marry at once. She would not even hear him out.

"My dear Dr. Clay, what nonsense is all this? My girl's not grown up, and what have you to offer her, I should like to know?"

Paul admitted his means were very moderate, but spoke of a new and better opening in prospect, that would enable him to marry.

She still refused to treat him seriously.

"No, no, my dear Dr. Clay, I can't spare my daughter. Girls shouldn't marry like that—so young. Your notion is a wild one, and I really hardly understand how you came to entertain it." Her astonished eyes said candidly, "What *can* the man see to like in Eliza?"

"I care for your daughter," said Paul bluntly. "I would make her happy if you and she would consent to let me try."

Mrs. Loraine said it was folly, and when Paul persisted, began to lose her temper. Further wrangling would avail nothing. He must accept his defeat with such dignity as he could muster.

"You know," he said at length, "that I would never run counter to your wishes. Dare I ask this much—that you will let her know of mine?"

"Yes, I will tell her; I promise."

And she kept her word. They left Wroxbury by the night express. Next morning Paul received a queer little note from Eliza. The writing was very shaky, the spelling likewise:—

"Please, please, Dr. Clay, don't ask mamma again. She was so dreadfully upset and vexed about it, you can't think. She only slept a little off and on in the train; went to rehearsal with a headache, and had bad neuralgia all last night. She can't, she couldn't, do without me now, and I can't go away while she wants me. For myself, I wanted to thank you, if I knew how.—ELIZA LORAINÉ."

V.

THAT was the end of Paul Clay's eccentric wooing. Though he would rather



"YOU PROPOSE TO ME FOR MY DAUGHTER?"

have succeeded, there was compensation in freedom. Active work began for him with promotion to a responsible post at Croydon. Henceforth medicine claimed his whole attention. Poetry, novels, dreams must go. In good time he married, wisely, and was happy ever after, though never exactly in love with his wife. Paul was so constituted that romantic love was impossible for him except for some preposterously superior object—duchess, queen of beauty or heaven-born genius. Always busy, he rarely got as far as London. But once, three years later, happening to visit an old patient, now in a nursing home at Hampstead, he heard the name of Eliza Loraine dropped by two nurses who were washing up, and asked questions.

"She came here very ill a twelvemonth ago, and stayed on afterwards to help with the lighter cases," said one.

"Then she's better now?" said Paul.

"Not now," said his matter-of-fact informant. "Really better she couldn't ever be. She's dying now, you know—her case was quite hopeless from the first. Bless me, Louie, another plate broke! The bull in the china shop's a joke to you," and they giggled.

Paul sent in his name to the patient, who asked to see him.

Eliza was certainly dying. As he had foretold, the over-strained, long-neglected, mistreated animal machine had got hopelessly out of gear. With more than one mortal complaint upon her, her hold on life had grown so weak that the letting of it go altogether might involve little change or struggle. She was weakly cheerful—not suffering much now—and almost pretty with her fined-down features, transparent complexion and the infantine expression that comes back to those whose day, long or short, is at its close.

Last year, she told Paul, Mrs. Loraine had chanced upon a first-rate maid who took everything in hand. "She rules mamma," said Eliza, "and keeps even the accounts straight. She is strong and clever, and manages better than me."

So Eliza came to the Home to be nursed, and everybody was glad, for it was much the best place for her now. Mrs. Loraine and her surroundings had to be sparkling. Sickness and trouble at the door would unfit her for the night's work. She must not even be told exactly how it was with Eliza.

Through the open window the scent of mown grass was blown in by the breeze.

"They are making hay," she said. "Do you remember that one day at Coppin's farm, long ago?"



ELIZA WAS CERTAINLY DYING.

"I have often thought of it and of you," said Paul.

"I usen't to let myself think of it and of—things," said Eliza; "it made me so silly. Now I can lie here and shut my eyes and fancy I am with them in the hay, and the larks are singing."

No doubt she would have liked a fitter sort of life and work, with regular meals, proper sleep, a country holiday now and then; to be busy and

happy a little in her own way; perhaps even—some women are such insurgents—to love or be loved; perhaps even a baby. But all the world knows that when a woman has to do without these she will manage somehow. And now that it had come to dying, she was doing that, too, in a quiet way, without interfering with the business or recreation of her fellow-creatures.

"Have you seen mamma in 'Fedora'?" asked Eliza. "They say it is splendid. She is coming to see me the first day she has time."

Paul called two days later, and was told she had died rather suddenly. Mrs. Loraine had come after the event and wept awhile; but she must not, she dared not, redden her eyes, damage her voice, or deaden her spirits. In a week the stress of life at high pressure forbade her even to recall her daughter's existence.

Paul does occasionally. He has told his wife everything, but cannot make her understand it as it really happened. She praises his generous intentions, but remains unconvinced that Mrs. March Loraine's daughter was not a good-looking girl. And as Eliza's photograph was never thought worth taking, Mrs. Paul Clay will remain of this opinion to the end.

Pens and Pencils of the Press.

By JOSEPH HATTON,

Author of "*Journalistic London*," "*By Order of the Czar*," "*Under the Great Seal*," &c., &c.

DR. W. H. RUSSELL.

"YES, I would like to go to England," said Dr. Henrik Ibsen the other day to Mrs. Alec Tweedie (who has told the story of her chat with the famous Norwegian in *Temple Bar*), "because English people and English books interest me strangely; more especially I would like to see your old men. In all other countries the best work is done between forty and fifty years of age; in England the best work is done by much older men, and a man of seventy or eighty is still in his prime." A similar remark was made to me by Mr. Wyse, a famous American lawyer. Art and journalism conspicuously bear out this idea of English virility in the opening article of this series of "*Pens and Pencils of the Press*," and in the first portrait of this second number.

Dr. W. H. Russell, known to his intimate friends as "Billy Russell"—and without any loss of dignity—is no less intellectually alert to-day than he was when he came home from the Crimea, the Pen of the War and the Lion of London. But the lame leg, which he brought from South Africa, makes horse exercise no longer possible, and he begins to put on the manner of the veteran. He walks with a stick, and looks far more like a military chief than a journalist, even without the adventitious aid of a single decoration. Of medium height and sturdy build, with thick grey hair and an almost white moustache, a face with the lines of time in genial wrinkles about the corners of a pair of bright eyes, the Pen of the War still suggests the capacity, the self-reliance and the independence of character which have made his name, his work and his books historical. No story of the Crimea can ever be told without the

Times correspondent as an important figure among the fighting and diplomatic groups; and no history of the Indian Mutiny is complete without certain passages from Dr. Russell's graphic diary.

Most of us have special memories of famous men under particular circumstances. They live with us in association with some noted occurrence, at the height of their fame, or resting in the declining years of a great career. I recall a picture of Dr. Russell sitting on a gun, note-book in hand, a foremost figure in Barker's well-known painting of the allied generals before Sebastopol. Another pictorial memory comes from a work of art hung in the *Times* office, representing him in his Crimean tent, writing one of those letters that marked a new era in journalism; but my memory will cherish a more homely scene, which belongs to a recent visit to his pleasant chambers at Westminster—a living picture of the gracious host, the private gentleman, among his books and household gods; a few military relics by way of ornament alone to remind one of the great wars in which he had been journalistically engaged. It excites peculiar sensations when you find yourself sitting down, for the first time, with a man—who is clad like other mortals and talks like an ordinary human being—of whose marvellous exploits and wonderful escapes from death you have been reading in the papers. Such was my accidental meeting with Lieutenant Greely after his Arctic adventures. I have had several similar experiences; and I had not known Dr. Russell sufficiently for this inspiration of hero worship to wear off, when I sat down to chat with the historian, who has described the battles of the Alma and Inkerman, the Balaclava charge and the fall of Sebastopol, not from official de-

spatches and reports, but as a spectator—the Pen of the War.

The brave man is a modest man, and the hero who has passed through perils by flood and field in the exercise of duty, is not easily drawn into talking of his adventures. A passing remark touching his lameness led to our talking of the Matabele fight and Dr. Russell's own adventures in South Africa, and I found that it was from this latest of his work, as a war correspondent, that he returned home lamed for life.

"And how did it happen?" I asked, with a sympathetic interest that he could not resist.

"I went to South Africa, you know, with General Wolseley," he said. "It was almost at the end of the Zulu trouble. A certain chief declined to come in and surrender. The General equipped a compact little force; we went out, had a bit of sharp fighting, close by the Matabele people's country; burnt the chief's kraal, and brought him and his wives prisoners to Pretoria. Well, on our way to Pretoria we had to halt and encamp. It was in the middle of the day, and I thought I would like to go on. We were not more than a dozen miles from Pretoria; there was no enemy in front, and I knew the country. Colonel Baker Russell suggested that I should have an escort, but I did not think it necessary. I knew that I should catch the mail-cart leaving Pretoria, and I offered to take any letters in from the camp. Colonel Russell said, 'perhaps Brackenbury may have some.' I had a good little pony, and I called on Brackenbury and took his despatches. He offered me a couple of orderlies. 'No,' I said; 'let the poor chaps have their rest; I shall be all right.' As I rode away Baker Russell called out after me, 'You had better have one orderly anyhow.' 'No, thank you,' I said, and away I went. Now, when I meet him with my lame leg, he says, 'Ah! you know I wanted you to have an orderly.' When I had pushed through the bush and reached the veldt, I saw that a storm was coming up—and they are terrible storms out there; so I hurried on for the river I had to cross, knowing that when the storm broke the water would rise, as it does in Africa, at a tremendous rate, and make it difficult crossing. I got down the waggon-way to the river-bed just as the storm broke violently. Entering the water, a blinding

flash of lightning terrified my horse, and he fell, with my left leg wedged under his shoulder and my right fast in the stirrup. I could not move. My head was partly in the water, the rain was coming down in torrents, and the river was rising. I made tremendous efforts to get the horse to move. He lay like a log. I gave myself up for lost. As the river began to reach my lips, I made a last struggle: the stirrup-strap broke and released my right leg. Then I got the horse up, and managed to drag myself into the saddle; but just before reaching the other side he fell again. This time I was not hampered by him. I struggled to my legs, and he, too, after a time; but it was a lucky escape, for the river was running now fast and deep. We climbed the bank together—I leaning upon the horse, unable to mount him. I was glad to see the house of Mr. Grey, a well-known farmer with whom I had dined more than once. He was standing just inside his door, speaking to one of his men; and as he saw me he shouted to the fellow:—'Don't let that drunken Dutchman come in here.' I was pretty well disfigured, you may guess—looked, no doubt, the character he thought he saw; but I shouted as well as I could: 'Grey, it is I! Grey, my dear fellow, it is I—Russell!' Presently he understood, and took me in. We were old friends. I had often ridden over to his place when I was staying with Lanyon at Pretoria. I went to bed, and the next day General Wolseley crossed the river with his force. My horse, by the way, died of his injuries next day. I told Sir Garnet Wolseley that I came to the conclusion that it was really all up with me; that I should be swept out to sea, and never be heard of more. 'Oh, but we would have found you,' said General Wolseley. 'We would have hunted you through all the world, and we would have given you a handsome funeral, never fear.' He offered to rig up an ambulance for me, but I preferred to remain with Grey. I returned to Pretoria that day in a waggon, but I am lame for life, can ride no more, and it is really a trouble to get about much, which is a great deprivation."

Nevertheless, he does get about; is to be seen often at his Clubs, always in good spirits, alive to the questions of the day, deeply interested in the world's doings, sympathetic towards the men who were his colleagues on the Press, and in touch



DR. W. H. RUSSELL.

with the younger men who will be the pens of the future; but with a hearty dislike for the worst features of the interview in journalism, which is being run into the ground by inexperienced *flaneurs*, and cheapened into commonness.

I led my host to talk about his books. When the late Duke of Clarence was induced, in a conversation with Russell, to mention the kind of wedding present the "Pen of the War" should send him, the amiable young fellow said, "Send me your books, Dr. Russell." To collect the volumes was a difficult task, but with the aid of the indefatigable and learned Quaritch it was accomplished.

Like Thackeray, Russell is not a fop about his books. Thackeray never had on his shelves a complete collection of his own works; and I did not find in Russell's library a single volume of his writing nor a photographic portrait of himself.

There are one or two war pictures here and there, but none in which he figures; no swagger trophies of Russia or India, no mementoes of distinguished friendships. Yes he has been almost everywhere, seen everything, and known personally all the great generals of our time; been on intimate terms with leading statesmen, authors, artists, celebrities of all kinds; and I naturally ask him if he is writing his reminiscences. I tell him Toole's story of Oxford. It was at the time when Toole was reading my proofs of his "Reminiscences," while on a visit to the famous seat of learning. He had been dining out, and was returning to his hotel at a rather late hour. He asked a policeman to direct him the nearest way to his hotel, and, of course, entered into a conversation with the officer. "Not much doing in your way, I suppose, at Oxford?" said Toole. "Well," replied

the officer, "we has our troubles now and agen." "But you have leisure hours I suppose. Do you read much?" "Well, not much," said the policeman. "Do you like reminiscences?" Toole asked, full of his new book. "I shouldn't mind," said the officer, "but I don't think there's any place open."

"Well," said Dr. Russell, when he had laughed over the comedian's little joke, "I am not exactly writing my reminiscences, but you know in my letters to the *Times* I never said anything about myself; of course, I was only a spectator, though I had some pretty rough adventures and experiences. More particularly during the Indian Mutiny, I had a very narrow escape—but adventures of that kind are, I need hardly say, part of one's inevitable experiences."

"You must have had personal adventures and strange experiences in the Crimea that would be deeply interesting, not to mention your personal association with the leading men of the time."

"Well, yes," he said; "I am writing a book somewhat on those lines; that is, I am dictating it; I find dictating rather irksome, but one gets over a good deal of ground in a short time, and then, of course, there is plenty of opportunity to revise and correct. In the Crimea, one had to work practically under fire; we were operating on a plateau, and continually exposed to the Russian guns."

"And the war correspondent wins no glory by being shot," I ventured to remark; "he is always, of course, looked upon as a non-combatant, though he may have to share the dangers of battle."

"No, he must not get shot," said Russell, with a smile. "'Poor devil,' they would say, 'what business had he there? Even his editor would resent it as a piece of unnecessary foolhardiness.'"

"That narrow escape during the Indian Mutiny, may I ask what was the nature of it?"

"Oh, well, it's a long time ago now," he said, with a deprecatory smile, "and it is in 'My Diary in India.'"

"That is one of your books which I don't possess," I said; "and I find your literary remains as difficult to collect as you have, though most of your volumes went into several editions, and all were eagerly read."

"I think 'My Diary in India,'" he said in an introspective way, "contains the best work I ever did."

Since our chat, I have obtained it from a resourceful second-hand bookseller, and read it again. It is a remarkable book—hot with the heat of India, rich with its colour and red with its fighting; you can see the flash of the English accoutrements in the sun, and hear the victorious trumpets. It was the picturesque touch, the artistic lights and shadows of Russell's descriptive letters from the Crimea that made his work so fascinating, apart from the fearless and honest exposure of our mistakes and distresses. Descriptive reporting is at its best in the 'Diary in India.' An example of this, taken at random, is the picture of Outram's advance against the Martiniere, and his crossing of the floating bridges or rafts over the Goomtee. "See, there is, indeed, a beautiful sight! the head of the column of British troops, is emerging from the woods which surround our camp and is marching upon the bridge. The scarlet of the Bays shines brightly in the sun. What a storm of lightning points—flashes of bright steel—burst through the clouds of dust! There go the Artillery, thirty guns. There go the Rifles—the dear old Brigade! Will the column never cease? Hour after hour it has been passing over and all the time we are in the hot sun and blinding dust on the top of the Dilkoosha. What swarms of camp followers! What a mighty *impedimentum* of baggage, deserts of camels, wildernesses of elephants, all pouring along towards the river; and then, following in parallel lines, the folds of the serpent-like column, which is winding away through corn-fields till it disappears in the woods on the horizon." Then later comes the enemy, and the fight, the messengers from the front, news of this officer's death and this one's victory, with all the bustle, excitement, glory and sadness of battles and battle-fields.

Presently, talking of the changes that had taken place in newspapers since the Crimean War, my host referred to the excellent descriptive work of Sala and, in later years, of Forbes; and he spoke with warmth of the latter's graphic account of the siege of Plevna. They say newspaper men and authors are jealous of each other. The little men may be jealous of the big ones; but I don't believe even Thackeray felt as badly about Dickens as some people would have us believe. Dr. Russell is big enough to be modest about his own work, and honest enough to be

able to appreciate the achievements of men who might be regarded as his rivals.

"I was injured, and had to travel in a dhooly," said Dr. Russell, by-and-by, in response to what barristers would call another "leading question" about his adventures in India, "before the battle of Bareilly. Weary and tired with pain, I felt myself in a dreamy, pea-soupy kind of existence; heard firing, leaned out of my dhooly, saw a long line of Highlanders, looking firm and cool. They were firing, but it seemed to me to be a kind of parade. Some native troops appeared to be moving in front of them, and hiding among the buildings against which their line of fire was directed. Then the firing died out. I felt very hot, thought I was going to die, but, instead, I fell asleep. I don't know what my dreams were, but my waking I shall not forget. Loud shrieks; my dhooly was raised up and dropped; heard my bearers shouting, 'Sowar! sowar!' then they flew. It was a regular stampede—elephants trumpeting and thundering along, camels, jingling of harness, and within a few hundred yards a cloud of sowars, the enemy, sweeping down upon us like the wind. As they came on, camp followers fell with cleft skulls. One could only feel that we were in for a quick and inglorious death. By the help of one of my men—how I don't know—I scrambled into a saddle. I was nearly naked; the saddle felt like a plate of red-hot iron, the stirrup irons like blazing coals; my legs and feet were bare. I flew across the plain under the most awful sun; I was in a ruck of animals; my man, Ramden, suddenly gave a cry of terror, with a look over his shoulder; I saw a black-bearded ruffian ahead of three sowars, coming right at me. I had neither sword nor pistol. Just at the moment a camel-driver, leading his beast, came between us. Seeing the sowar right across his path, he darted under the camel's body. The sowar reined-in his horse round the other side of the camel, and as the man rose I saw the flash of the tulwar falling on his head like a stroke of lightning. It cleft through both his hands, which he had raised in supplication, and, with a feeble gurgle, the driver fell close beside me, his skull split to the nose. I felt my time was come. My naked heels could make no impression on my panting horse. I saw a body of men advancing in a cloud of dust, and at

that moment a pain shot through my head; my eyes flashed fire. I was not insensible. I felt that I knew what had happened. I had been cut down; I put my hand to my head; there was no blood; still the faintness, I was sure, must be death. Then I was dreaming that I was in the hunting-field, the heart of the pack around me, but I could not hold my horse; my eyes swam; then it seemed as if I plunged into a deep, cool lake, and in which I sank deeper and deeper until the hissing waters rushed into my lungs and choked me. It turned out that I had been struck down by the sun instead of the sowar, and had fallen from my horse close to the spot where Tombs' guns were unlimbering, and that a soldier who belonged to the ammunition guard, and who was running from the sowars, seeing a body lying in the sun, all naked except a bloody shirt, sent out a dhooly, when he got to the road, for a dead officer who had been stripped, and I was carried off to the cover of some trees; and eventually, I need hardly say, since I am here, got well again. On that day of my mishap the heat from twelve o'clock till sunset had been tremendous; all over India during those dreadful hours we lost hundreds of men by sunstroke."

Dr. W. H. Russell is an Irishman, with the vivacity of his nation and the courage of a British war correspondent. A student of Trinity College, Dublin, he attracted the attention of the editor of the *Times* by his graphic and humorous descriptions of the Irish election scenes of 1841. He wrote them at the request of a namesake, who had been sent over by the *Times* to manage the Irish department of the paper during what was a very exciting period. When has Ireland been without elections of lively interest? This led to his accepting a position on the staff of the leading journal. He entered the Middle Temple, and was called to the bar, but his journalistic engagements absorbed most of his time. His first employment of any importance abroad was during the Danish war, though he went across the seas for the *Times* on sundry other occasions with great advantage to his paper.

His picturesque and impressive story of the Crimean war, and his services to the State at a critical period of our history, might well have been recognised, long ago, with a knighthood, or even a

baronetcy; but Russell, "The Pen of the War," is still plain William Russell, with the exception of the LL.D. conferred upon him by his Alma Mater. He has, however, been decorated by the Queen and by several foreign potentates. Amongst other distinctions he has received the Indian War Medal and clasp for Lucknow, the Legion of Honour, the Iron Cross of Prussia, the War Medal for 1870-71, the Turkish War Medal for the Crimea, an Order of the Medjidie and an Order of the Osmanieh, the Order of Franz Josef (Commander) of Austria, and the Order of St. Savoeur. He has been a leading figure in all the great wars of our time, having been the first to carry the Press banner to the front with all the disabilities that belong to a non-combatant, the dangers of being killed, without the glory of a soldier, the difficulty of fulfilling judicial functions without the privileges of the Bench, a bearer of despatches without escort — sometimes mistaken for a spy, and rarely understood or appreciated even by the commanders to whom he rendered important service as impartial historian and volunteer soldier at one and the same time; all of which has been often and sadly proven in the heroic sufferings and deaths of martyrs to journalistic duty.

The foremost of British war correspondents, Dr. Russell has been a great traveller in times of peace. He is the author of books that will live in the literature of his country, notably "Letters from the Crimea," "My Diary North and South," "The Great Eastern and the Atlantic Cable," "My Diary in the East," "The Prince of Wales's Tour in India," and "My Diary in the Last Great War." These volumes are principally revised reprints of his contributions to the daily Press; and he has also found time and inclination to write a novel, "The Adventures of Dr. Brady," which is full of a genial humour, and distinguished for its clever characterisation.

I remember Willert Beale, ("Walter Maynard") the author of two interesting books of reminiscence, "The Enterprising Impressario," and "The Light of other Days," telling me some interesting incidents connected with Russell's lecture tour, which was Beale's speculation in his impressario character. We were talking about work that had been done under pressure, and I had instanced

Archibald Forbes's description of the fight at Plevna. Beale mentioned one of the most vivid descriptions in the English language of a battle having been written on a drumhead by Russell when he was in a raging fever and while the Russians were flying from the field of Alma. It was published without the alteration of a word.

When Russell had prepared his lecture, a few friends were invited to a rehearsal of it at the Westminster Club. Russell stood in the middle of the room, at a small round table and read his manuscript nervously and in a tone of depressing monotony. A supper was spread at the close for a friendly company, and after a pleasant evening, all the guests having departed except Douglas Jerrold, Arthur Barlow, Beale and the lecturer, Douglas Jerrold suddenly exclaimed "Russell, you must learn to read."

"I know I must," said Russell, "but who will teach me?"

"I will" cried Jerrold. "You do yourself an injustice in reading so tamely the mighty words you have written. Listen to me, and you shall learn how to thrill an audience."

Whereupon, picking up the lecturer's manuscript, Jerrold turned over the leaves until he came to the Battle of the Alma and commenced to recite the chapter.

"It would be difficult," Beale has since written, "to imagine a more dramatic reading. The tone of voice, the gesture, appearance, fire, energy of the little figure in the gaslight certainly thrilled the limited audience and seemed to be a revelation to Russell, who, perhaps then for the first time, discovered for himself the intrinsic power and effect of his own writing."

The effect of Jerrold's example was to take Russell frequently to his friend's house. But in spite of training and example the *doyen* of war correspondents remained a nervous reader, though, like Forbes, in later years, he improved with practice, and his tour was eminently successful.

Reminding Dr. Russell the other day of this incident, he said, "Yes, I believe it is more or less correct. I well remember Jerrold taking up the manuscript and reading certain passages of it, and I shall never forget how nervous I was when the night of the lecture came. It was at Willis's Rooms. When I peeped through

a chink from the back of the stage, and saw Lord Lucan and a whole row of distinguished men, whom I was inclined to regard as my enemies, and when I looked further and saw a perfect sea of faces, I turned to Willert Beale and said, 'I can't do it; I don't feel well. Go on and tell them I am taken ill. It will not be the first time a lecturer has been unable to fulfil his engagement.' A minute later, Thackeray thrust into my hand a tumbler of champagne, which, after all, was not the best thing in the world in such an emergency, and the next moment poor John Deane pushed me on. I heard afterwards that when I appeared several hands that had urged me on my wild career were seen to disappear. However, when I found myself there, I got on all right. Everybody was very kind; and later, when I had had some experience, I found the work rather pleasant than otherwise."

In these last days of the century, it seems quite natural that the age should be reminiscent. Contemplating the veteran War Correspondent, and glancing back over his remarkable career, one feels that, beyond what he has given to the *Times* and to the library, there are many personal experiences, side-lights of character, historic incidents, personal adventures that it would be a sin not to place on record. There is a reticence that belongs to such work as he has done, which may now be usefully relaxed, more particularly in regard to the Crimean War.

JUSTIN HUNTLY MCCARTHY.

By way of contrast to Pens that have grown grey in the service of the Press, it will be interesting to introduce to the reader one of the youngest of the great army of literary workers. Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy has had a unique train-

ing and experience. The son of a journalist who learnt and practised his calling in both America and England, young McCarthy began to be a newspaper man when he was little more than a schoolboy, and he brings to his position as dramatic critic of the *Pall Mall Gazette* a cultured style, a love of the play, and a proper sense of responsibility. One hears a great deal of the new journalism and the new criticism; but seeing that the evolution of the newspaper, from the first *Gazettes* and *Mercuries*, is a matter of daily change and growth, the new journalism is a misnomer, and as for the new criticism, it is equally difficult of definition. A thing is not necessarily a novelty because some one calls it new. Men write about the "new journalism," the "new criticism," the "new humour," as if patents had been taken out for new methods, fresh systems, things that had been invented. Granted that the literature of journalism has improved, that the personal paragraph is almost an artistic performance, that the editorial article has risen to the dignity of an essay not unworthy of Montaigne, Lamb, Hazlitt or Hunt: yet there is no clean-cut change in newspaper work to-day that justifies the title of "the new journalism."

I venture to say this with all deference to contrary opinions, more especially having regard to certain log-rolling associations that are sensitive to anything in the shape of opposition. New journalists there are, it is true, in plenty; young journalists, clever journalists coming on, and it would be hard indeed if they should be without new ideas.

Journalism has long been the author's sheet-anchor. There are few purely literary men who can live without newspaper work, though the prizes in journalism are few and the duties laborious. The young journalist, whose ambition is



MR JUSTIN H. MCCARTHY.

Photo. by]

[Maull and Fox

not to be confined within the four walls of a newspaper office or limited even to foreign correspondence, is none the less a faithful newspaper man though he woos the Muses, or seeks for fame and honour in the wide field of authorship.

Young McCarthy's Pegasus is a steed broken to harness and not always winged. There is nothing more beautiful than youthful ambition, and nothing more easy to forgive than its egotism. Mr. McCarthy has naturally made both friends and enemies by his fearless and often masterly criticisms in the *Pall Mall Gazette*; but the earnest critic does not write for friends or for enemies. His duty is to Art and his paper; but one may remark in a general way that sympathy is the first requisite in criticism. Whether they agree with the *Pall Mall* critic or not, all who have read his work must have been struck with the writer's literary style, which gives to his contributions a charm wholly distinct from the nature of his opinions.

Mr. McCarthy is a journalist of versatility and resource. He has written several stories—"Doom," "Lily Lass;" some history—"An Outline of Irish History," "England Under Gladstone," and "A History of the French Revolution" in three volumes. He has given to the stage one or two excellent adaptations from the French, and sundry original one-act pieces, all of which he is modest enough to regard as so much mechanical training for the writing of plays, which is the work that has for him, as for many others, a peculiar fascination. He has studied languages in a desultory way, and in this direction he has gone sufficiently out of the beaten track to have published a translation of the Persian poetry of Omar Khyyam. He has shown himself to be a poet of grace

and feeling, with a musical ear and a dainty fancy, in the four volumes which he has published; the first, "Violets," a collection of sonnets printed privately; the second, "Serapion," published in 1883 and long since out of print; the third, "Hafiz in London," a series of studies of Orientalism; and his latest volume, "Harlequinade."

"I hope to do more verse and to write plays," he says a little nervously, now that he understands I am talking to him for the purpose of this series of Pens and Pencils; "but at present, my work as dramatic critic of the *Pall Mall Gazette* takes a deal of my time; though I still try to keep my personal work—dramatical, historical, and in fiction—going on. My aim as a critic has been to express with absolute frankness my sincere opinions, and to advocate certain new ideas which, I believe, will do so much for the stage in England. I love the art of the stage, and admire and respect its professors."

"You have travelled a good deal?" I remark, by way of inquiry.

"Oh, yes; a considerable portion of my childhood was spent in the United States; and among the places I love best—after Ireland, of course—are Athens, Rome, Cairo, Constantinople and Madrid."

Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy is the youngest of our dramatic critics. He was, I believe, the youngest member of Parliament during the several sessions through which he sat for an Irish borough. Born in 1860, it will be generally conceded that, for a young life, Mr. McCarthy's has so far, been a full one. If he is to be regarded as typical of the new journalism, so called, the ambition of the new school is a high one, and promises well for the century upon which these present days are already casting their forward shadows.

A Society Sphinx.

By SOPHIE KAPPEY (Mrs. Alfred Hart),

Author of "A Modern Martyr," "A Double Ruin," &c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

"How tired we feel, my heart and I!
We seem of no use in the world;
Our fancies hang, grey and uncurled,
About men's eyes indifferently;
Our voice, which thrilled you so, will let
You sleep; our eyes are only wet:
What do we here, my heart and I?
Yet who complains? My heart and I?
In this abundant earth no doubt
Is little room for things worn out:
Disdain them, break them, throw them by!
And if before the days grew rough
We once were loved, used—well enough,
I think, we've fared, my heart and I."

COLONEL VARIEN was rich, forty-five and a bachelor.

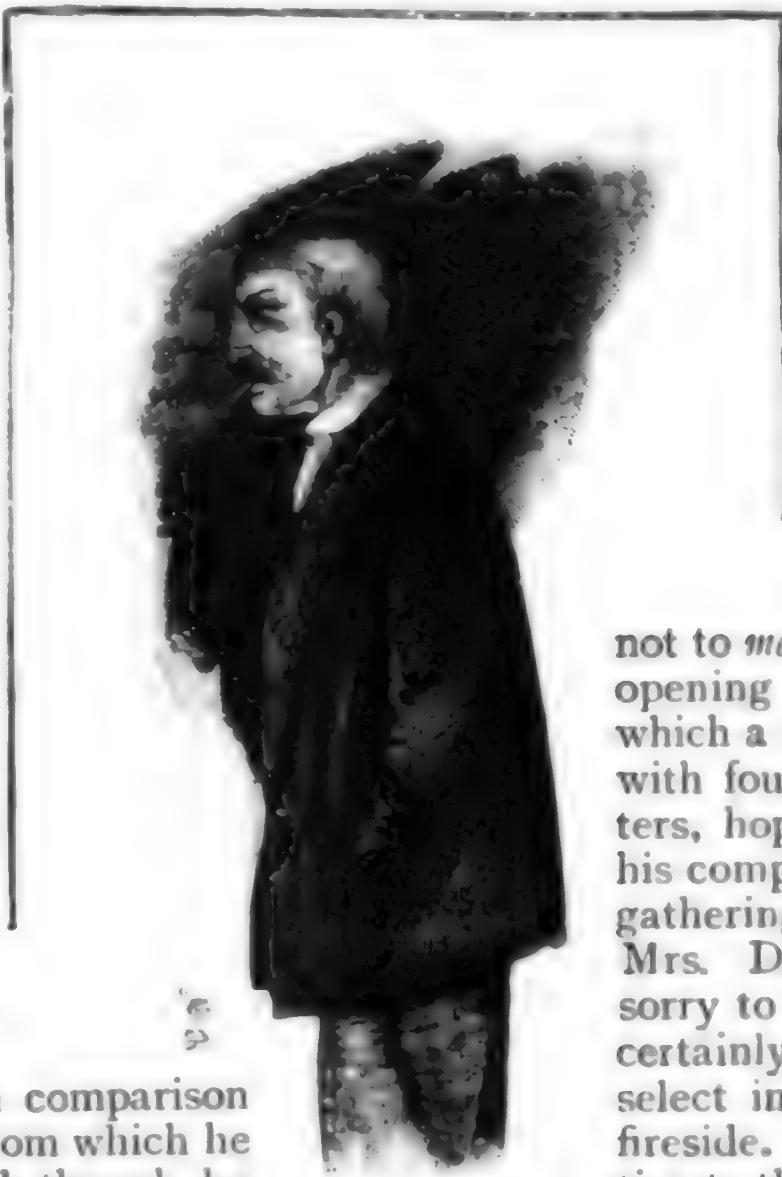
When on active service he received a wound, engendering consequences so serious, that, in the prime of life, they necessitated his quitting the army—honoured, though not consoled, by the compensatory rank of colonel.

It had been a bitter blow to him, this enforced retirement. None, not even his closest friend, had guessed his anguish when he learnt that for him all dreams of fame, all the wild glory of fighting for Queen and country, all hopes of making a name were ended. Only, on rare occasions, he was wont to say that the physical agony he had suffered was naught in comparison to that mental ordeal from which he had emerged a changed, though by no means a soured, man.

The disappointment subsided, however, just as the pain in his slightly crippled limb grew less. But when at his club he read, perchance, tidings of some brilliant exploit in India, in which his old regiment had behaved so well—of an old comrade's success—of all the many things that go to make up a soldier's life, he would yearn with all his great heart to be "up and doing," and his fingers would move nervously, as though once more grasping in earnest that sword that now lay idle—rusting away like its master!

Colonel Varien was sitting in his study before a blazing fire; a cigar—that never-failing source of consolation—between his lips; books—those blessed means of recreation—by his side; letters—mute evidence of friends—within his hands.

"What a budget," he cried, looking down on the latter, and leisurely scanning the handwriting upon each envelope. "Mostly invitations, I expect; invitations to my money, not to *me*. Ah! I thought so," opening one pink missive in which a certain Mrs. Dethomas, with four marriageable daughters, hoped for the pleasure of his company at their Christmas gathering. "No, no, my dear Mrs. Dethomas! I shall be sorry to deny you, but C—— is certainly not the place I should select in preference to my own fireside. I have a distinct objection to the cliques which flourish in your small town. Much as I



COLONEL VARIEN.

like composite elements, the Clergy, Army and Navy are each a little too conscious of their own superiority. I'll not go there—nor there—nor there!" he continued, throwing down one epistle after another. "I am far too fond of true sympathy to court the vapid smile of Society, her smirk of forced interest, her tepid handshake. I should like to spend my Christmas with a dear old chum," he went on dreamily: "to listen to innocent laughter, to know that the tongue need not bear false witness to the heart. In short, to feel that my silence is not misconstrued, nor my words misunderstood. But as that is not possible, I'll stay at home with you, old dog," patting a huge retriever crouching at his feet, "and together we'll make ourselves comfortable, won't we?"

He sighed and shook himself as though to dispel some brooding thought. By this movement, a letter, hitherto unnoticed fell to the ground.

Colonel Varien picked it up and mechanically broke the seal.

As he read, a flush of pleasure illumined his features, a totally different aspect to the mask they usually wore.

Looking at him thus, one suddenly became aware that he was a very handsome man. Why one could scarcely define, as his countenance possessed none of the ordinary landmarks of beauty. It was decidedly irregular. Nevertheless, when that dark head, with its powerful brow, uprose in contrast to an acknowledged Adonis, the showy charms of the latter paled into insignificance before those of one upon whose forehead sorrow and care had set their unique stamp.

Had he wooed—or had he ever been wooed? To both questions, yes. Like the rest of his brotherhood he had indulged in fiery flirtations, all of which, however, had ended in "smoke." His shrine had been bombarded by maidens whose patron saints must assuredly have flourished in Leap Year. Still, deep in his heart, lay hallowed a little grave, upon whose memorial stone was written the name "*Audrey*," and when, with misty glance, he peered therein the treasure it held was the sweet face of a child-woman, whose fair head had rested near his heart; whose red lips had murmured "I love you," and whose blue eyes, since ten long years, were closed in the sleep which giveth peace eternal.



WHEN AT HIS CLUB.

The letter he was reading with such interest, and which was curving his mouth into its rare smile, ran thus:

"Ralph, old chum, it is six years since we met, and I am married. Yes, I am trotting in double harness with the sweetest wife that ever blessed unworthy man. Shall I describe her to you? No, you must come and personally inspect my treasure, who will welcome the friend of my youth with the welcome he alone deserves.

"I have so often thought of you and wondered whither you had migrated. The other day, by the merest chance, I heard of your whereabouts. The result? I want, nay I insist, that you shall form one of the house party, Lena thinks necessary to emphasize the festive season. I guarantee you shall not be bored. Among those who have already arrived is a most singular woman; I hardly know whether I like her or not. The 'little one' is infatuated, consequently I am inclined to question the wisdom of her judgment. However, none can gainsay the fact that Claire Duval—a widow—is a most fascinating specimen of her sex. She is also lovely, but with a beauty so

enigmatical that we have christened her 'The Sphinx.' Her eyes are steel grey; her mouth—ah! I don't like her mouth; it is so red and curved, and sinful—a mouth from which a lie and love words would leap with equal adroitness. But her most striking characteristic is her hair. I never saw the glory of woman in such luxuriance; its many coils seem to bow her head.

"You will say I can describe a stranger—but not my wife. But you know there are certain pictures in a gallery whose points are so tangible that the merest sight-seer can grasp them; others, whose charm is so subtle—so fleet, that they defy description. Of such an order is Lena.

"Now, dear boy; will you write, or better, wire a favourable reply? Someone is looking over my shoulder and asks me to inform you that your 'bachelor' comforts shall be minutely studied. Is she not impudent?

"Au revoir; in a few days I hope to clasp hands and prove that neither time nor absence has changed the sincerity of your friend,

"ALEC NOTLEY."

In answer, Colonel Varien wrote:

"MY DEAR NOTLEY,—What good fairy directed your thoughts in my direction I know not; but to her—Salaam! To you—Thanks—the thanks of a lonely man stranded upon the dreary shores of ennui, and congratulations—sincere congratulations. I, who have known what it is to lose, can measure the happiness of your possession; and while the memory of a past joy floods my heart, I can wish, in a fuller sense than other men, that your treasure may be near you always. God bless you both!

"Your invitation I accept, and already eagerly look forward to

the pleasure of 'inspecting' your picture-gallery, and to—what is ever dear to me—learn how the world we entered together years ago is moving. I want to know so much. I'm a walking note of interrogation, past, present and future. You will have to unfold all, perhaps in the hours when the picture-gallery is locked up for the night, and the curtain of sleep is drawn over their beauty! So be prepared, and don't imagine that my bachelor comforts begin and end with cigars and slippers!

"Old chap, I long to see you again. You link me to a train of thought that speeds me through the many scenes of our school days—the fights, the matches, the prize days. I am wondering if it is as clear and fresh in your mind as in mine? Do you see with the same distinctness as I that glorious day when we carried the challenge cup home in triumph? I suppose not—for you a life of quiet in the old country was mapped out. You never felt the mad enthusiasm that carried my imagination through Sandhurst to a regiment, through war to glory. And how sadly my dreams have ended! A brief though happy time was allotted to me, not wholly unattended by that success I dreamed of. Then my sorrow, of which you know; and, lastly, the blow that cut me off from the bright and active life and left me nothing but the grey tints to study. And I find these grey shades so tedious, so dull, for while they harmonise with the powers of this poor,

maimed body, they leave the spirit restless and ill at ease. Growling again! What a soured old soldier you will picture me, and perhaps I am!

"But yet, not so soured that I cannot envy you—in a most unchristian-like way—your exist-



"THIS, VARIEN, IS MY WIFE."

ence, so complete in its cycle that nothing is wanting to roll your stone smoothly along the grassy spots of life.

"Yes, we are very wise, we bachelors, when we moralise and thank Heaven we are not wearing the shackles of matrimony. If only the world could know our hunger. Since I have been in England, I have frequently met our old schoolfellow, Dyson, and in him I see something to be shunned—something to be avoided. He is a bachelor, and outwardly glories in his freedom. But I have seen this champion of masculine liberty drop into a despair dreadful to witness; and I know that in his soul there is a great longing for little ones around him, some one other than himself to care for—one who would lead him to a nobler and better sphere.

loved and well remembered friend. Then, loosening his hand from its mute, but eloquent clasp, Notley's sought that of Lena; and, pushing forward the figure standing near, he said, with much pride in his voice: "This, Varien, is my wife."

Ralph had, perhaps, feared he would be disappointed in his friend's choice. It was a needless fear, however, for from the instant he felt the contact of those small fingers his sympathies were given, and he acknowledged that Alec had done both wisely and well.

For the charm of Lena Notley was essentially feminine. She was an unconscious champion of her sex; for seeing her, men instinctively felt better.

In figure she was small and of extreme slimness; her eyes were beautiful—both

pure and proud in expression. Her mouth, if weak, was the mouth of a woman who could be very sweet and very tender. She gave Ralph the impression that in all crises of her life, her reason would rise from heart to head, instead of

descending from head to heart; and one had not to dive below the surface to see that she loved her husband with an absorbing love, returned by him with a

passion equally true and great.

"Your room is in readiness," cried Alec presently, anxious to perform the functions of host. "When you are dressed, come to the drawing-room, and in a few minutes I guarantee you shall be quite at home with all of us."

Colonel Varien, when shown the chamber allotted to him, was struck with the air of quiet refinement pervading the house. Many evidences of wealth were to be seen, but of such an unobtrusive order that they soothed and comforted the observing faculty, rather than disturbed it with curiosity or surprise.

Presently he descended to the drawing-room, from whence issued sounds of much merriment.



DEEP IN CONVERSATION.

"I, too, tho' I know that in this world there can be no resurrection day for my dead dream, I long for a re-kindling of the light that is no more—but the fire has died out, and I have no fuel wherewith to replenish it.

"Adieu! To-morrow I may be with you."

"RALPH."

CHAPTER II.

"The rose-red ear that then my hand caressed,
Those smiles bewildered, that low voice so sweet,
The truant threads of silk about the brow
Dishevelled, when our burning lips were pressed
Together, and the temple-pulses beat!
All gone now—where am I, and where art thou?"

"RALPH! how glad I am to see you!"

Thus spoke Alec Notley as, side by side with his wife, he greeted his best

Mrs. Notley came swiftly forward, as though she had been awaiting his arrival, and proceeded to introduce the tall, slightly-limping figure to the various guests seated around.

At last they paused before one woman, who, from previous description, Ralph guessed was she known as the "Sphinx."

Have you ever stepped into a conservatory filled with strange tropical plants, whose scent oppresses instead of delighting the senses? If so, the sensation of Colonel Varien on encountering the beauty of Claire Duval will be understood. It made him sceptical; it planted distrust; but—it mastered him. For, although he had intended to pass over to where Alec stood leaning, at a slight movement made by the dress of the stranger, he sank on to the sofa at her side, and was soon deep in conversation.

Naturally enough none but the most trivial topics were introduced and skimmed. But from several remarks she made, Ralph gathered that his companion was both clever and cynical, also that her eyes were occasionally the most uncomfortable he had ever looked into. They made him restless, ill at ease, and yet they fascinated him.

"You are a very old friend of the Notleys?" she asked, apparently for something to say.

"Of Mr. Notley. To-day, or rather this evening, is the first time I have ever seen his wife. Is she not charming?"

"Very," was the response. "A little weak—perhaps, a little childish; but, as you say, charming. It was a most curious episode, our friendship. When travelling up the Rhine, my hat blew overboard. Mrs. Notley lent me one of hers, and thus, through the agency of a capricious wind, we became intimate acquaintances. This is my first introduction to Notley Hall, nearly all present being strangers to me. I am not an adept at getting on



ALEC AND RALPH REMAINED IN THE SMOKING-ROOM.

with strangers—unless I choose." She looked straight at him, and again

he realised that she was beautiful.

When all the guests had retired to rest, Alec and Ralph remained in the smoking-room talking. It was the first opportunity which had occurred for any private conversation, and both were eager to pour forth their hearts after their long separation.

"What do you think of Lena?" was almost the first question.

Colonel Varien smiled. "I knew that was coming," said he. "What strange beings we men are. However much we value a possession, it is never so precious as when appreciated by others. Well, your little one, as you call her, is adorable."

"Is she not? Ah, you do not know the blessedness of true marriage."

"I quite believe that such a state is all-satisfying," said Ralph, sighing wearily; "but it is given to so few to grasp. I once dreamed a dream—its end, if you remember, was a grave."

"Has no one replaced her?"

"No. Sometimes, I own, I do get unutterably lonely; for, denied work, a dog and an old servant the only living creatures about one, one is apt to speculate as to the 'why' and the 'wherefore' of one's existence. However, in such moments as

ence, so complete in its cycle that nothing is wanting to roll your stone smoothly along the grassy spots of life.

"Yes, we are very wise, we bachelors, when we moralise and thank Heaven we are not wearing the shackles of matrimony. If only the world could know our hunger. Since I have been in England, I have frequently met our old schoolfellow, Dyson, and in him I see something to be shunned—something to be avoided. He is a bachelor, and outwardly glories in his freedom. But I have seen this champion of masculine liberty drop into a despair dreadful to witness; and I know that in his soul there is a great longing for little ones around him, some one other than himself to care for—one who would lead him to a nobler and better sphere.



DEEP IN CONVERSATION.

"I, too, tho' I know that in this world there can be no resurrection day for my dead dream, I long for a re-kindling of the light that is no more—but the fire has died out, and I have no fuel wherewith to replenish it.

"Adieu! To-morrow I may be with you.
"RALPH."

CHAPTER II.

"The rose-red ear that then my hand caressed,
Those smiles bewildered, that low voice so sweet,
The truant threads of silk about the brow
Dishevelled, when our burning lips were pressed
Together, and the temple-pulses beat!
All gone now—where am I, and where art thou?"

"RALPH! how glad I am to see you!"

Thus spoke Alec Notley as, side by side with his wife, he greeted his best

loved and well remembered friend. Then, loosening his hand from its mute, but eloquent clasp, Notley's sought that of Lena; and, pushing forward the figure standing near, he said, with much pride in his voice: "This, Varien, is my wife."

Ralph had, perhaps, feared he would be disappointed in his friend's choice. It was a needless fear, however, for from the instant he felt the contact of those small fingers his sympathies were given, and he acknowledged that Alec had done both wisely and well.

For the charm of Lena Notley was essentially feminine. She was an unconscious champion of her sex; for seeing her, men instinctively felt better.

In figure she was small and of extreme slimness; her eyes were beautiful—both

pure and proud in expression.

Her mouth, if weak, was the mouth of a woman who could be very sweet and very tender.

She gave Ralph the impression that in all crises of her life, her reason would rise from heart to head, instead of

descending from head to heart; and one had not to dive below the surface to see that she loved her husband with an absorbing love, returned by him with a

passion equally true and great.

"Your room is in readiness," cried Alec presently, anxious to perform the functions of host. "When you are dressed, come to the drawing-room, and in a few minutes I guarantee you shall be quite at home with all of us."

Colonel Varien, when shown the chamber allotted to him, was struck with the air of quiet refinement pervading the house. Many evidences of wealth were to be seen, but of such an unobtrusive order that they soothed and comforted the observing faculty, rather than disturbed it with curiosity or surprise.

Presently he descended to the drawing-room, from whence issued sounds of much merriment.

Mrs. Notley came swiftly forward, as though she had been awaiting his arrival, and proceeded to introduce the tall, slightly-limping figure to the various guests seated around.

At last they paused before one woman, who, from previous description, Ralph guessed was she known as the "Sphinx."

Have you ever stepped into a conservatory filled with strange tropical plants, whose scent oppresses instead of delighting the senses? If so, the sensation of Colonel Varien on encountering the beauty of Claire Duval will be understood. It made him sceptical; it planted distrust; but—it mastered him. For, although he had intended to pass over to where Alec stood leaning, at a slight movement made by the dress of the stranger, he sank on to the sofa at her side, and was soon deep in conversation.

Naturally enough none but the most trivial topics were introduced and skimmed. But from several remarks she made, Ralph gathered that his companion was both clever and cynical, also that her eyes were occasionally the most uncomfortable he had ever looked into. They made him restless, ill at ease, and yet they fascinated him.

"You are a very old friend of the Notleys?" she asked, apparently for something to say.

"Of Mr. Notley. To-day, or rather this evening, is the first time I have ever seen his wife. Is she not charming?"

"Very," was the response. "A little weak—perhaps, a little childish; but, as you say, charming. It was a most curious episode, our friendship. When travelling up the Rhine, my hat blew overboard. Mrs. Notley lent me one of hers, and thus, through the agency of a capricious wind, we became intimate acquaintances. This is my first introduction to Notley Hall, nearly all present being strangers to me. I am not an adept at getting on



ALEC AND RALPH REMAINED IN THE SMOKING-ROOM.

with strangers—unless I choose." She looked straight at him, and again

he realised that she was beautiful.

When all the guests had retired to rest, Alec and Ralph remained in the smoking-room talking. It was the first opportunity which had occurred for any private conversation, and both were eager to pour forth their hearts after their long separation.

"What do you think of Lena?" was almost the first question.

Colonel Varien smiled. "I knew that was coming," said he. "What strange beings we men are. However much we value a possession, it is never so precious as when appreciated by others. Well, your little one, as you call her, is adorable."

"Is she not? Ah, you do not know the blessedness of true marriage."

"I quite believe that such a state is all-satisfying," said Ralph, sighing wearily; "but it is given to so few to grasp. I once dreamed a dream—its end, if you remember, was a grave."

"Has no one replaced her?"

"No. Sometimes, I own, I do get unutterably lonely; for, denied work, a dog and an old servant the only living creatures about one, one is apt to speculate as to the 'why' and the 'wherefore' of one's existence. However, in such moments as

these"—touching Alec's hand—"it is good to live."

The eyes of the two men met, those of Alec charged with a brotherly sympathy, Ralph's unusually languid with regret. No speech was necessary between friends so loyal and true.

With an abrupt change of topic, the name of Claire Duval was mentioned. "And our 'sphinx,'" said Notley; "what do you think of her?"

"The sobriquet is admirably chosen. The woman—well—what on earth made you invite her to your place?"

"Then you mistrust her?"

"I did not say so. Simply the friendship between her and your wife is, to say the least of it, extraordinary."

"Lena, sweet soul, pities her. She has been the recipient of a rambling yarn about early misfortunes, blighted loves, cruel husband, etc., which had the effect of entirely melting her heart. Mind you, I like Mrs. Duval, but I should like her better were the sea between us."

"All the men seem in love with her," retorted the Colonel grimly.

"Naturally. Who stays at a country house without fencing with Cupid? You will be of the number, I expect."

"Not I; my fighting days are over—in every way."

"Dear fellow!" said Alec gently.

"But I am not going to be a wet blanket," continued Ralph, with fictitious gaiety. "In a few days Father Christmas will be here, and I intend to be the merriest of his worshippers. If only I were not hampered with this leg of mine," stretching forth his constant sorrow. "Never mind; if I cannot dance, I'll pipe for those who can."

"By-the-way," remarked Alec presently, after they had sat for some minutes in silence puffing at their cigars, as if he could not help referring to the subject; "how do Mrs. Duval's eyes strike you?"

"What a queer fellow you are,"

answered Ralph. "They are all right; I didn't particularly notice them."

"Sure?"

"Well," hesitatingly, "they may, perhaps, be a trifle bizarre."

"Then they did arrest your attention. I hate her eyes! There is something weird and uncanny about them, as if an evil spirit lay enthroned therein—and yet how wonderfully fascinating they can be at times. I can imagine any youngster growing desperate for love of them."

"Any youngster? Yes, youngsters are always ready to court the poison bottle and pistol. We may be unjust towards the woman, however. After all, nothing is

so unreasoning as prejudice, nothing harder to uproot. If you really and seriously object to her, there is always a polite way of showing the cold shoulder."

During the following days Ralph had ample opportunity for studying the characters of his fellow-guests. No one in particular interested him save the woman whom he distrusted, and she came in for the lion's share of his analytical faculty.

Each time on entering a room he determined to avoid her, and each time on quitting it; it was from her side that he rose, for she had the rare gift of adaptability. One glance seemed enough to reveal the string upon which

she should play. Those who came to her sad, found in her tones a corresponding melancholy, and *vice versa*. Strange, then, that in the midst of all these attractions one could pause to question them!

It was Christmas Eve, and Mrs. Duval and Colonel Varien were watching the animated groups flitting from one corner to the other of the spacious drawing-room of Notley Hall.

"How happy they all seem," uttered the former softly, fixing her peculiar eyes upon one young couple, who appeared oblivious to all else save their own individual presence.

"Everyone is happy at Christmas—



"IT IS A SPLENDID GEM."

time," answered Ralph briefly, disliking the sentimental ring in her voice.

"You are not—and I am not."

"I!" he echoed in surprise; "I have never been so light-hearted since ——"

"Since when?"

"Since I knelt beside the grave of my lost betrothed."

"Ah, I knew you were wedded to a regret."

"May I ask why you are unhappy?" ignoring the tender drift of the conversation.

"The revelation would not interest you," thrusting forth one elegant little shoe and plaintively scanning its point. "Women are unreasonable and unaccountable in their dreams—for we, too, have our ambitions."

"And yours?"

"Shall I tell you?" looking at him with eyes grown languid with seeming anguish. "No—for you dislike me." Then, as if wishing to drag herself down to the commonplace, she said, "How that ring of yours glitters. It would flash like a comet in the dark."

"Yes, it is a splendid gem. You would scarce credit that it is but a chip of the now quite celebrated diamond recently found in the Y—— mine. I have been fortunate enough to see the original, and it rivals in brightness the stars of Heaven. You like diamonds?"

"'Like'—what a pale word—I adore them. You will smile when I say that all the princely wealth of Indus could scarce satisfy me. But I am poor—ignored," she concluded, almost hissing the word, "nay, am gratefully accepting the hospitality of my friends."

"Why so bitter? For where'er you go you can say, *veni, vidi, vici!* Besides, you underrate your power, Mrs. Duval," he continued. "At this present moment I could place my hand upon four who are writhing beneath it."

"Mere boys!"

"And when do boys of twenty-eight and thirty become men?"

"Hush! Lena is going to sing. When she has finished, you must tell me why I am distasteful to you."

He would have spoken,

but the word "Hush!" again silenced him.

And then, while the voice of his friend's sweet wife rose and floated through the room, he felt the form of the woman at his side glide a little nearer. He became conscious of her soft, rapid breath upon his cheek, and that her glance was fixed upon him in merciless scrutiny. Lifting his hand to his brow, he found it damp with moisture. His lips grew parched. It was as if some hidden power were striving to quell and master him.

He tried to rise, but could not, so he turned and looked into the eyes thus boldly challenging him. They were widely parted—the pupils dilated, the iris of immense brilliancy. His glance remained transfixed, rooted by the triumph of hers. He could not flee it: gaze demanded gaze; and only when the last notes of the song died away was he freed.

"Were you trying to mesmerize me?" he queried lamely.

"I was trying my power."

"I thought you repudiated it."

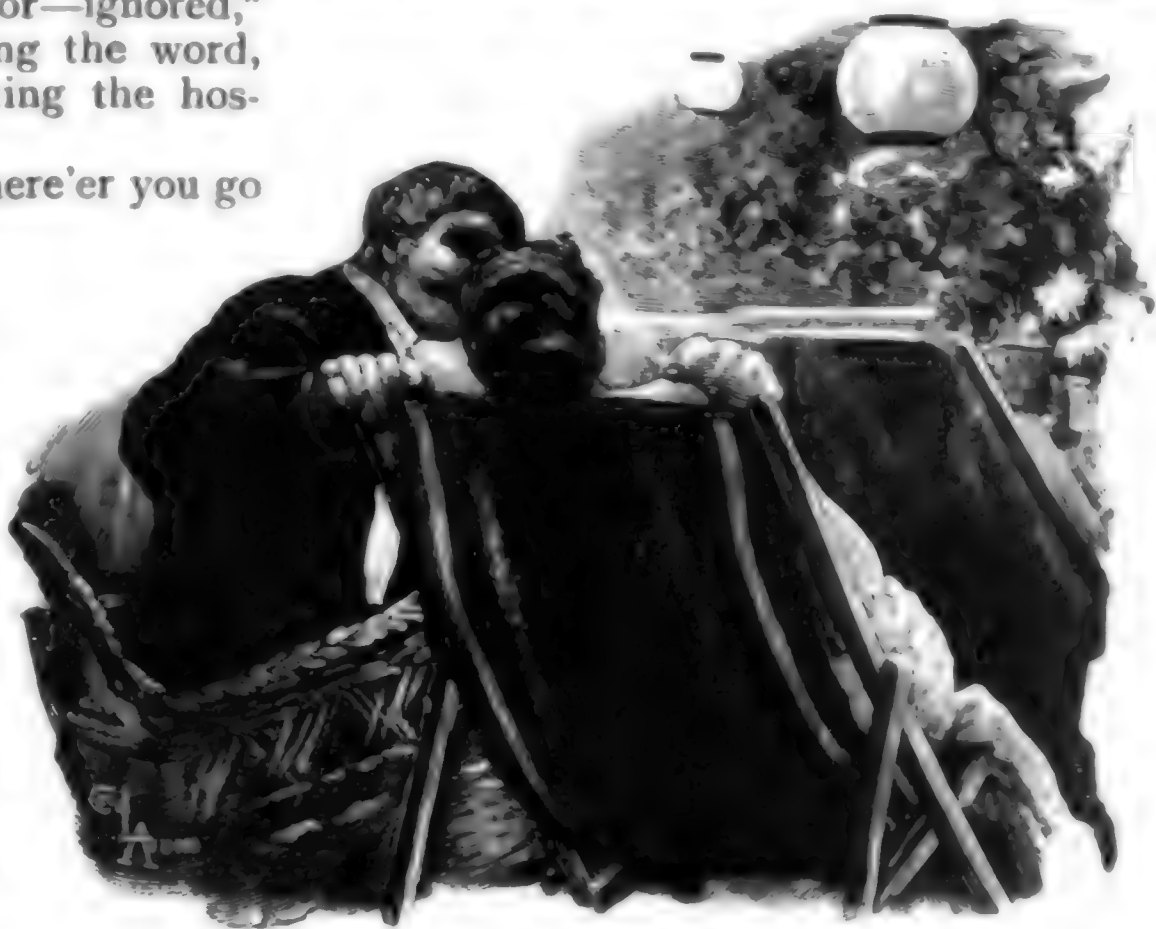
"Not always."

"Am I a good subject whereon to experimentalise?"

"A very unwilling one! Come, answer my question. Why ——"

"Do I fear you? Well, come with me into yon curtained room, and I may, perhaps, explain."

They made their way through the merry throng and entered the little chamber,



BUT HE KISSED HER.

arranged by discreet hands for solitary *tête-à-têtes*.

When there, she sank down into a low, softly-cushioned chair, he choosing one slightly higher. She looked up into his face, uttering, with an eloquent uplifting of the brows, the one word, "Well?"

He smiled. "I find I have nothing to say, madame."

"Monsieur, then it was rude to disturb me."

"You desire the reason of my apparent dislike? Supposing I say it, and the latter have disappeared?"

"I should not be surprised," with audacious but indescribably charming coquetry.

"Why?"

"Because there is an undercurrent of sympathy between us."

"Between us? Why, we have scarcely known each other six days!"

"Have you lived so long and are you still unaware that to some mortals a year may be spanned in a day? Do you not know that we may live in close contact with those around us, and be as inscrutable to them as fate? Oh! it is such a fallacy to imagine that intimacy necessarily constitutes an insight into the workings of one's heart. A strange hand may raise in an instant the curtain that shields our more delicate thoughts from the gaze of the unsympathetic intimate."

"Am I to infer, then, that this hand, looking down upon the member in question with an ironical glance, 'is so honoured?'"

"You may infer what you choose," she cried, throwing back her head and shooting a haughty glance.

"You are very beautiful," he cried gravely.

"My face is my fortune," was the quick retort.

"But are not a good woman—not a bit good," he pursued.

"Indeed! And the gist of this conclusion."

"That you would make a man dare all for your sake—even forget his honour."

"Would he not be a free agent?" was the languid, caressing enquiry.

Suddenly she took his hand: "I should like to be good."

"Then try."

"It is so hard to struggle alone."

"God will help you."

"God!" she said, with unconscious

deprecation. "He has long ago deserted me. No, I am not of the fortunate ones. I must shape my destiny, and all I have to aid me is this," extending in turn her hand—"and this," touching her lovely face with lingering fingers.

Colonel Varien watched her closely while she made this statement, diverse emotions flitting across his face. It was long since he had seen anyone so strange, so alluring—long since his heart had beaten so furiously —

"Well?" said the caressing voice again.

"You are a sphinx," he muttered in unsteady accents.

"So I am told," drawing a little nearer, so that her magnificent hair almost brushed his cheek.

He knew not how it happened, but he kissed her.

"Audrey! Audrey!" shouted an outraged memory, though no sound passed the now hard lips of Colonel Varien. The transformation was complete—he hastily excused himself, and as she watched him depart, a few unintelligible words of no good import escaped the beautiful, defeated Sphinx.

CHAPTER III.

"Methinks I have passed through some dreadful door,
Shutting off summer and its sunniest glades
From a dark waste of marsh and ruinous shades:
And in that sunlit past, one day before
All other days is crimson to the core;
That day of days, when hand-in-hand became
Encircling wims, and with effluent flame
Of terrible surprise we knew love's lore."

THE day after Christmas Day dawned bright and clear, and everyone was seemingly in the brightest of spirits.

Claire Duval and Colonel Varien had not spoken to each other since the preceding night, a fact unnoticed by the rest of the community in their pleasant anticipation of coming excitement; for Lena had insisted that a ball should be given, and, like a dutiful husband, Notley had given way to his small tyrant's behest.

He was glad that he had done so, for when the evening arrived, and he saw the radiant faces of the women and the smiling ones of the men, and heard the sweet, inviting strains of the music, he realised that there is no pleasure so great as that of giving pleasure to others.

And then his little one—"Was there

ever anyone to equal her?" he asked Ralph, as together they watched the small, sylph-like figure flitting like a fire-fly from one guest to another.

"Stay, Mignonne," he cried, as she at that moment passed; "and give a few words to your lord and master. Let him assure himself that you are mortal and not some slender spirit from another sphere."

Lena paused at the loving words. Her look said, "I am yours," but her answer was mockingly given:

"My garments are earthly, monsieur. Are you aware that you have torn the lace of my sleeve, and that my flowers lie shattered at your feet?"

"What do you want with flowers, sweet blossom that you are?"

"To improve my appearance, sir!"

"And supposing I say that that is impossible?"

"Then I retort that a compliment from my husband, after three years of marriage, is the very dearest flower I could cull!"

"My heart?" he murmured softly; and Ralph smiled, as, with misty eyes, he viewed their pure devotion.

At that moment their attention was arrested by a buzz of admiration, and on looking up to ascertain the cause, they found that Claire Duval had entered.

"Can women so differ?" was Ralph's reflection as he rapidly compared the fragile creature standing near the superb form of her whose slave he had been for one brief minute.

And well might he think so. Although dressed with extreme simplicity, Mrs. Duval gave one the impression that her attire, as her mien, was imperial.

No jewels flashed from her bare arms and throat, simply in her hair was posed

a huge amber crescent, truly a wicked-looking ornament.

She moved slowly into the room, conscious that she was the centre of observation, and made her way towards the spot where stood Alec and Colonel Varien.

She did not glance at the latter, but, linking her arm within that of Mrs. Notley, passed on to a seat in another part of the room.

"Come, darling, and tell me the names of a few of your guests," said she. "It is so stupid to be dancing and talking with people when you haven't the faintest idea who they are."

Lena obediently proceeded to enumerate a string of names, adding that her friend would not be much the wiser for it.

"No, perhaps not," was the laconic reply. "How charming Mrs. Lemaire is looking this evening."

The lady in question was a little American, who had been staying at Notley Hall previous to the arrival of her husband from abroad.

"Yes. And are not her jewels superb?"

"Truly, I have never seen them before to-night."

"This is really the first opportunity she has had for displaying them."

"They are almost too valuable to have in a house. Ah, this is our dance, Captain Farren? Then I must leave you, Lena." And smiling on Alec's wife, she joined the throng of dancers and was lost to sight.

"What beautiful eyes," thought Mrs. Notley. "I could understand those eyes compelling one to any action."

Midnight was long past, and the Christmas revelries were still at their height. As is often the case amidst great merriment, some heart is sad; and Colonel Varien's, as he lounged in solitude against



SHE MOVED SLOWLY INTO THE ROOM

one of the open doors, was a prey to many bitter-sweet reflections. He thought of his father and mother, long dead—of a little dark-eyed sister, who had lived to reach no higher than his heart, when

"God's angels beckoned from afar.

And the sweet white brow was all of her."

His arrested career! Ah, that was a mortal blow; for had not his cup been already filled to overflowing by the loss of his dear love? Yes, it was at a gathering similar to this that he had first met her. He almost remembered the dress she had worn and the wreath of ivy nestling in her coronet of golden hair. Ah, if their two lives had run together, how different would all have been. Perchance, a little one would have played around his fire-side; and, stretching forth his hands, a wife's might have met and clasped his; while now his fingers were licked by the tongue of a faithful dog—the only caress ever proffered him in his lonely room.

The notes of a waltz throbbed upon the air; and as Claire Duval passed, her eyes sought his. Had he cared to read their expression, he might have interpreted it with the words, "Let me console." But his soul rose in revolt against the woman whose lips he had kissed almost against his will; and he prayed that never in this life nor the next would the memory of his first love be effaced or usurped again.

* * * * *

Two days later, whilst Colonel Varien was deep in the mysteries of shaving, he was arrested in that delicate process by a peremptory knock at the door of his dressing-room.

"Come in," he cried, turning his lathered face in that direction and holding the razor in mid-air, preparatory to the next downward sweep.

That sweep was not taken, for, in less than a minute, his face was plunged into cold water, and he was confronting his early visitor.

"Alec, old man! What is it?"

Well might he utter the exclamation, for Notley had, evidently, come to him in distress so dire that it seemed already to have drawn and aged his countenance.

"Something horrible, something disgraceful has happened," was the answer,



"COME IN," HE CRIED.

framed by the white lips. "Mrs. Lemaire and Max Verner have been robbed."

"Robbed!" was the astounded reply.

"Yes! My brain is in a whirl. To think that such a thing should happen in my house."

"Come, come, calm yourself, Notley. Tell me, at least, the bare facts, and we may, perhaps, arrive at a possible conclusion as to how we shall act."

"Well, you know that I am always the earliest bird in this never-very-early establishment, and, as is my wont, I was just stepping into the conservatory to pick Lena's flowers, when I heard some one call my name."

"Turning round, I found Mrs. Lemaire dressed in a loose peignoire, hair dishevelled and with a face as white as a sheet."

"What is it?" I asked.

"My diamonds! my sapphires!" she gasped; "they have been stolen."

"Nonsense," retorted I. But on further parley, I discovered that it was only too true. The tray of her jewel-case devoted to their keeping being absolutely empty. I tried my best to soothe the poor little woman, wresting from her a promise to say absolutely nothing about it until proper measures have been taken, and succeeded in calming her to a certain extent. She had hardly left the room when Max Verner entered.

"I say, old chap," he began; "there's been dirty work over night. My dia-

monds have taken unto themselves legs and walked !' You can imagine my two-fold horror. However, I extracted from him a similar promise of secrecy ; he, good fellow, doing his best to pooh-pooh the matter, saying : ' I should not mind a scrap, Notley, if I hadn't promised to have them made into a necklace for my best girl '—and to think," ended Alec, "they are stolen ; horrible ! horrible !"

Colonel Varien said nothing. What could he say ? A thief, an anonymous letter writer, a hypocrite, do they not require long patience to unearth and unmask ? "Nevertheless there is no time to be lost ; we must question all the servants."

"The servants ! I cannot ; good honest folk, who have been in my service ever since I was married. Why it would break their hearts if they thought I suspected them."

"Ah ! but there are ways and ways of asking. Speak to them as friends ; show them your trouble ; let them bear witness to your great distress, and, if perchance one of them should have yielded to temptation, believe me he will repent. *Trust* is a terrible thorn to a guilty conscience. If that tactic does not answer, and we are assured of their innocence (for I am a good judge of a clean heart), we must watch for the coward and traitor and catch him red-handed."

With a heavy sigh, Alec, later on, submitted to his friend's advice. One by one, the servants were called in to their master's study, and the two men, who delicately questioned and anxiously scanned their faces, could find in the latter nought but uprightness, and in their voices a wholesome ring of truth.

So they began to lay plans to catch the thief. Without a word to anyone of the change, Mrs. Lemaire was to vacate her room and occupy that of Colonel Varien. Then, when Lena was sleeping, Alec was to steal forth, and, with the Colonel, hold his vigil. Fair and slight of physique, he hoped that the thief would not perceive

the change, while Ralph stood behind some curtains draping a nook in the wall.

In waiting for nightfall well might they have sung : "Oh ! long, long, weary day !" The hours were more than leaden-footed, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Alec evaded the many questions of his wife.

"You are ill and suffering, dear ?" she asked again and again. "You are hiding something from me—your little one !"

And then her husband stroked and caressed the small, anxious face, loving its owner with an exceeding love.

It was strange how the four actors in this little drama avoided each other.

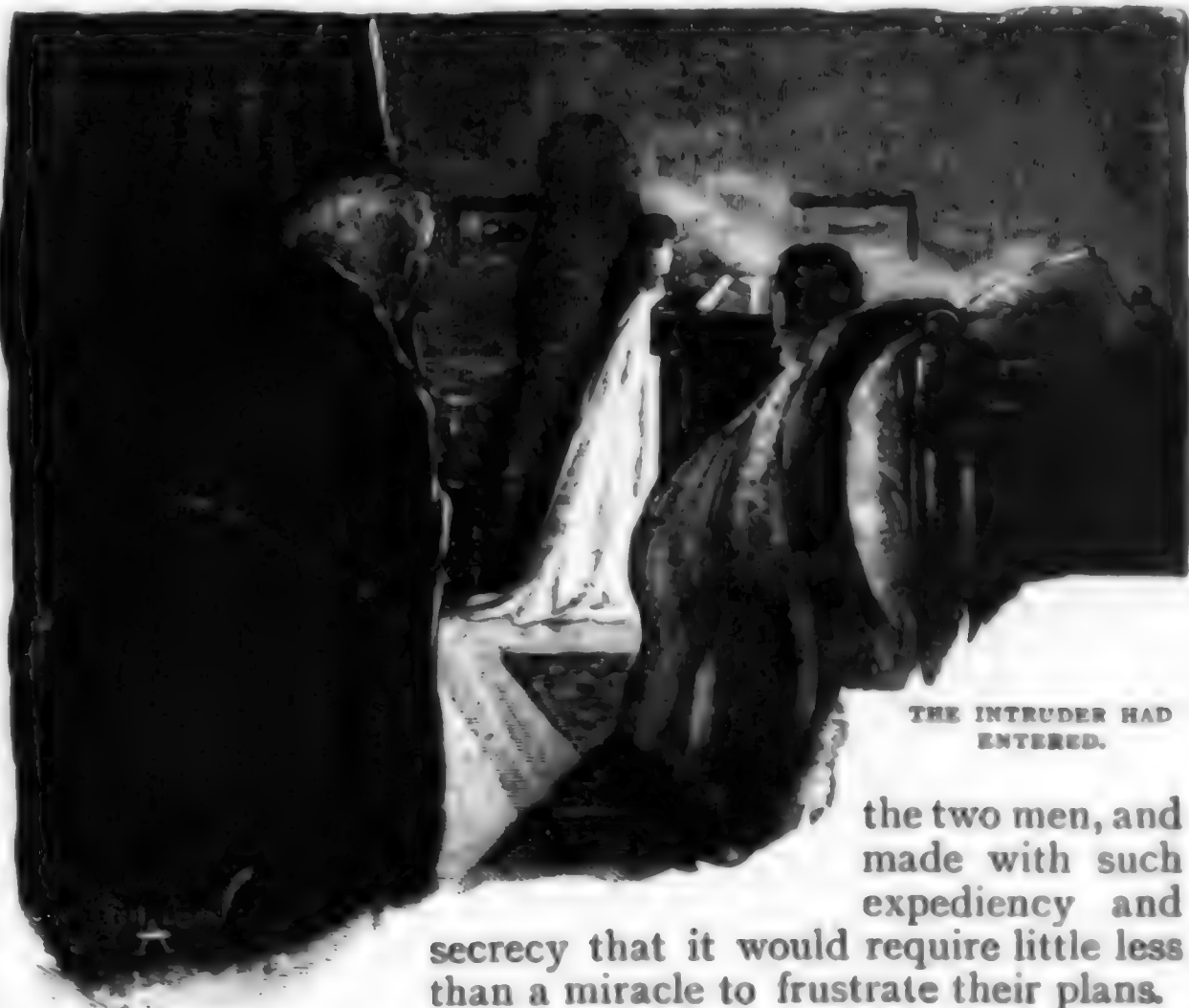
Ralph rarely spoke to Notley. Alec gave but furtive glances to Varien. Mrs. Lemaire, in her turn, assumed a tone of gaiety too forced to be natural.

Claire Duval alone seemed to scent that something was in the wind, but as all her subtle queries were fenced with equal adroitness, she appeared to think she was mistaken, and that the restlessness she noticed was due to a physical and not a mental cause.

It was marvellous the way in which she let each feel that if advice or sympathy were needed, she would lack neither.

"All things have an end," to use a well-worn truism, and the slow evening dwindled to a close.

Every arrangement had been made by



THE INTRUDER HAD ENTERED.

the two men, and made with such expediency and secrecy that it would require little less than a miracle to frustrate their plans.

A few rings had been placed in the unlocked jewel-case before the American's mirror, and one or two articles of lesser value. Besides, the thief must in no way be allowed to think that suspicion was aroused.

Midnight had long struck when Alec Notley softly rose from the side of his adored and sleeping wife. With difficulty he refrained from kissing the closed eyes, whose lashes so innocently swept the pale cheeks. When looking upon her thus, he seemed to realise how much he loved the frail help-mate who was verily his comfort and his soul's twin spirit.

With a sigh, he quitted the room, and ere long his slipperless feet had noiselessly borne him to where his friend stood awaiting his arrival.

Both were very pale and uttered scarce a word; nay, the very avoidance of the topic added a ghastly significance to their errand. Only the word, "Ready!" announced that each had assured his vantage point of spy, and that both were watching and waiting.

Half an hour—three quarters of an hour passed, and still no sign of life. The little night-light upon the dressing-table flickered, and its dimness gave birth to grotesque shadows upon ceiling and wall. Once or twice a wakeful sigh quivered upon the air, the only evidence that two pair of eyes were wide open and on the alert.

Suddenly, an almost imperceptible sound made itself felt rather than heard. Someone was approaching so swiftly—so lightly, that the tread seemed scarce human.

Hush! Whither was it gliding? would it halt, or pass?

The figure on the bed moved slightly, the curtain in a certain corner of the room shook as if disturbed by a passing current of air. Then the handle of the door was slowly turned, and the intruder had entered.

For one instant the sight of Notley grew blurred; the heart of Ralph almost ceased to beat. Then the head of the former uprose from the pillow, and that of the latter emerged from its screen.

"Lena!"

That little word of four letters was uttered in voiceless tones—so voiceless that it disturbed not her who bore it.

No! no! The light was playing him false; that was not the woman whom he had left an hour previously, steeped in slumber innocent as a child's, standing there fingering the jewels of another with speculating movement and seemingly critical eyes—that woman in the guise of a Madonna and with the instincts of a thief!

He was going mad. Ah, God! This cruel brain-throb—this numb despair grinding at his heart. The tortured husband groaned, but the groan was strangled in his throat and no sound was heard.

And Ralph, who was witness to his shame, what would—what did he think? Aye, he too, was petrified, incredulous, horrified at the grimness of the situation.

Meanwhile the tragedy continued. This and that object was lifted by the hands of the midnight visitant, and after an apparent choice had been made, she, with a faint smile of satisfaction, quitted the chamber as noiselessly as she had entered it.

Then the two men leaped forward into the middle of the room and confronted each other. The ghastly face of Alec stood out in the faint light like the face of a corpse. His arms groped blindly forward, and Ralph, as he grasped them, found that the form of the strong man was trembling violently.

"It was a lie, Ralph! It was a lie!" broke forth the hoarse cry.

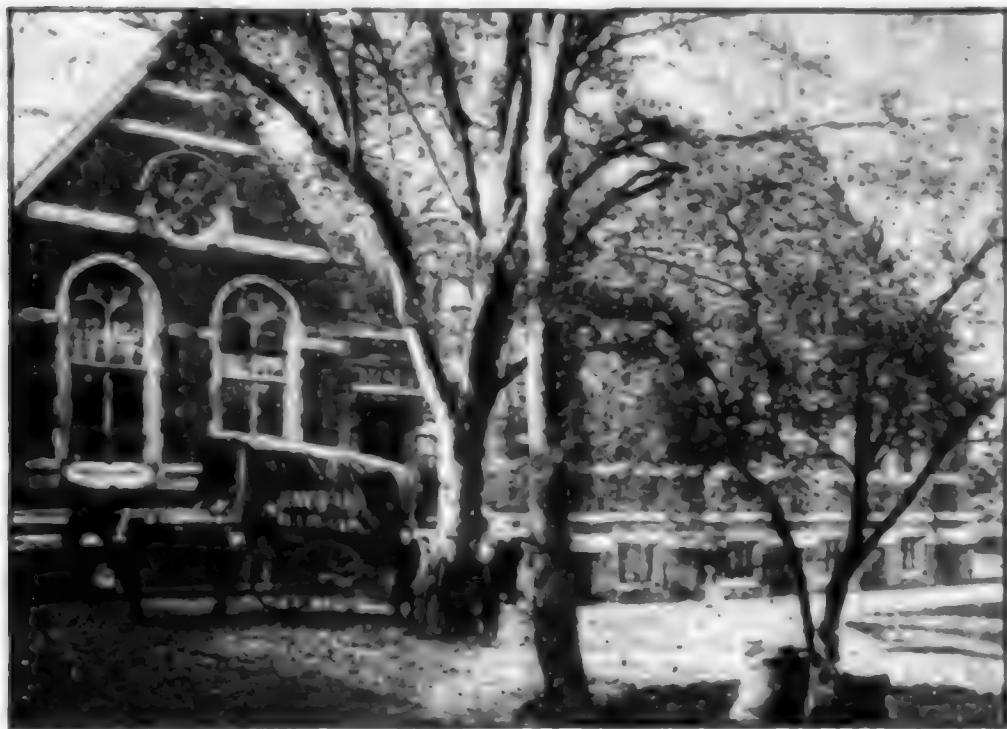
And to the friend he loved, Colonel Varien could offer no comforting acquiescence.

(To be completed next month)

Young England at School.

THE LEYS SCHOOL, CAMBRIDGE.

"In Fide Fiducia."



ENTRANCE TO GREAT HALL.

THE illustration of the terminus of the Great Eastern Railway Company, in Liverpool Street, is a well-known picture to many readers of the LUDGATE MONTHLY, but some may ask why we include it with our views of "Leys." It is, however, interestingly connected with Cambridge, as this company's route is the shortest and most direct to the great University town.

A capital service of express trains run daily from this station and St. Pancras, either direct or stop there, en route for Lincoln, Doncaster, York, and the North and North-West of England and Scotland.

The journey is performed in a few minutes over the hour, and every accommodation is provided for passengers' comfort. I particularly noticed

how punctually the trains both started and arrived, for, having arrived on the platform, almost breathless, as the clock read 9.46, I was informed my 9.45 was going through the next station, much to my discomfort, and although I was aware that



EN ROUTE TO CAMBRIDGE.—LIVERPOOL STREET STATION.

the last official record of time keeping issued by the Board of Trade showed that the Great Eastern Company's trains reached a higher percentage in the matter of punctuality than the trains of any other of the large railway companies in the Kingdom, I felt inclined to blame the railway company instead of myself for missing the train. It was, however, only a short delay, and in seventy minutes from starting I was enquiring my way to Leys School from an official at Cambridge station.

I preferred to walk, for it was one of the most beautiful days of last autumn, and the tints on the foliage were rich and more gorgeous than I had ever seen them before.

Ten minutes sufficed to bring me to Trumpington Road, a name that must bring reflections to many, as it did to me.

Trumpington and its road! What scenes and reminiscences does the mention of Trumpington conjure up to the mental vision of every Cantab! Perhaps Chaucer trod the latter, for does he not speak of the mill at Trumpington? Has his poetic spirit haunted Cambridge? For, strange is it, that Cambridge is truly the

mother of an illustrious line of poets, from Milton to the last Poet Laureate; Dryden, Gray, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Byron were her sons of song, and Marlowe, too, among the dramatists. In the Trumpington Road, at the higher end of Cambridge and opposite to Old Hobson's Conduit—a conduit made by the old carrier immortalised by Milton, for whom he wrote two epitaphs; immortalised, too, in the speech of every-day life—for has not his method of horse-letting passed into a proverb, "It's Hobson's choice; this or nothing"—is placed the noble Leys School.

After illustrating Cheltenham last month, the oldest of what is termed our modern schools, it seems a big jump to immediately give Leys, the youngest but one of England's public schools; but as Leys has been recently the subject of much comment in the scholastic world, owing to the addition of new Science Buildings to its already noble pile, no better time than the present would fit this school to take its place in our series.

As I entered the Trumpington Road, it was very evident to me that Leys would



A VIEW OF LEYS, SHOWING THE NEW SCIENCE BUILDINGS.



MR. A. W. OUTRAM.

not lack in interest, and that it would prove a good field for illustrations, for there the College playing fields, with its pretty pavilion and the school in the background, presented the prettiest of pictures.

Mr. A. W. Outram, secretary to Leys School, gave both our artist, Mr. Thomas and myself, valuable assistance in compiling this article, and, indeed, our reception was entirely without precedent. Not only did Mr. Outram interest himself in our mission, but all the masters, from Dr. Moulton himself, appeared pleased we had paid the school a visit.

Each day we sat down to an enjoyable luncheon, and although we do not have, as a rule, much time for the pleasures of the table, it is needless to say we fully appreciated their kindly attentions; for more than once have we been compelled to satisfy our cravings at the "tuck shop," which is all very well in its way, but buns, and Fry's chocolate can hardly be called tempting to a hungry man.

The Leys was founded in 1875 to supply a long existing want—the training of the wealthier youths of Methodist families on public school lines. The Universities of England, having in 1871 swept away the religious tests, which, up to that date, excluded Englishmen who did not conform to the Established Church from the benefits which those learned bodies offered, the founders had another great and important object in view, when opening the doors of their school, to allow Nonconformists to enter the Universities, after preparation amid those influences which would tend to preserve and strengthen the impressions of childhood.

Although Leys claims to be a Nonconformist school, it is by no means compulsory that a boy should belong to that body to be eligible to enter the school, for at all times, as at the present, there has been quite a number of Churchmen at the Leys; notwithstanding which, never before have I seen both unity and brotherly feeling so apparent, and running through the life of any school, as at Leys.

The high esteem with which Leys College is held by the Universities was apparent to any who were fortunate enough to be present in the Great Hall on October 21st last, on the occasion of the opening of the new Science Buildings by Lord Kelvin. The ceremony was simple



THE HEAD-MASTER'S HOUSE.

enough in itself, but it saw the most illustrious representatives of the ancient University joining brotherly hands with the promoters and guardians of the school, and Dr. Moulton in the presidential chair, surrounded by the most distinguished men of the University of Cambridge. It was, indeed, fortunate for Leys, that the promoters were able to obtain the services of such a great master as Dr. William F. Moulton—a gentleman of revered character, and with the highest reputation as a scholar. He is an M.A. of

London; the two Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh have honoured him, the former by conferring on him its honorary M.A. (a distinction seldom granted), and the latter its Doctorship of Divinity. He was a member of the New Testament Revision Committee, and has during his Head-mastership held the presidency of the Wesleyan Conference. He is a linguist of no mean order, and an excellent Hebraist. To Dr. Moulton and him alone (for he has had no predecessors) the school owes much of its success, for he has truly moulded it into shape, not only as a Nonconformist Public School free from proselytism, exclusiveness, and sectarianism, but as a common centre and home of Methodists, and also of those who can sympathise with, and appreciate the work done by the followers of John Wesley.

He has gained the entire respect, and I might call it, love, of all his past and present pupils, and believes in allowing them freedom that would not be countenanced at other schools, leaving the prefects to maintain order, and the boys to feel themselves more at home than under severe restrictions abroad.

Before I go into the details of the school, I consider it will be interesting, and particularly so, as connected with the foundation of the school at Cambridge, if I give a few of the remarks that passed from the eloquent speakers on the occasion of the opening of the New Science Buildings.

The Head-master, in the utmost tone of sincerity, attested the loyalty of the



CHEMICAL LABORATORY.

Wesleyan body to the Throne, and next gave "The University." "It was," said Dr. Moulton, the "light emanating from this ancient seat of learning amongst other reasons that induced the founders to plant the Leys at Cambridge, and they would never forget the gracious reception which the University gave them, and the constant kindness since shown."

Professor Jebb, M.P., expressed on behalf of the University a large admiration for the success and efficiency of the school, and Sir George Chubb, Vice-Chairman and Hon. Treasurer, spoke on behalf of the governing body, their appreciation of their esteemed Head-master and his staff for the high position the school had attained in such a comparatively short space of time."

Perhaps the most important remarks, confirming the friendship of the school with the University, came from that famous scholar, Dr. Butler, Head-master of Trinity, who, in proposing the toast of "The School," assured the Head-master that everyone connected with the University was a friend of the Leys, and those who had been at Cambridge longest, who had seen the birth of the school and marked its rapid growth, felt unfeigned joy at its prosperity; it was an institution that commended itself to their cordial sympathy, and even affection. Meanwhile, Dr. Butler had caught sight of the boys, who were anxiously crowding into the gallery, upon whom he took the opportunity of impressing the fact that, no matter how hard the masters strived to

attain success, it was purely they who must "make" or "mar" a school.

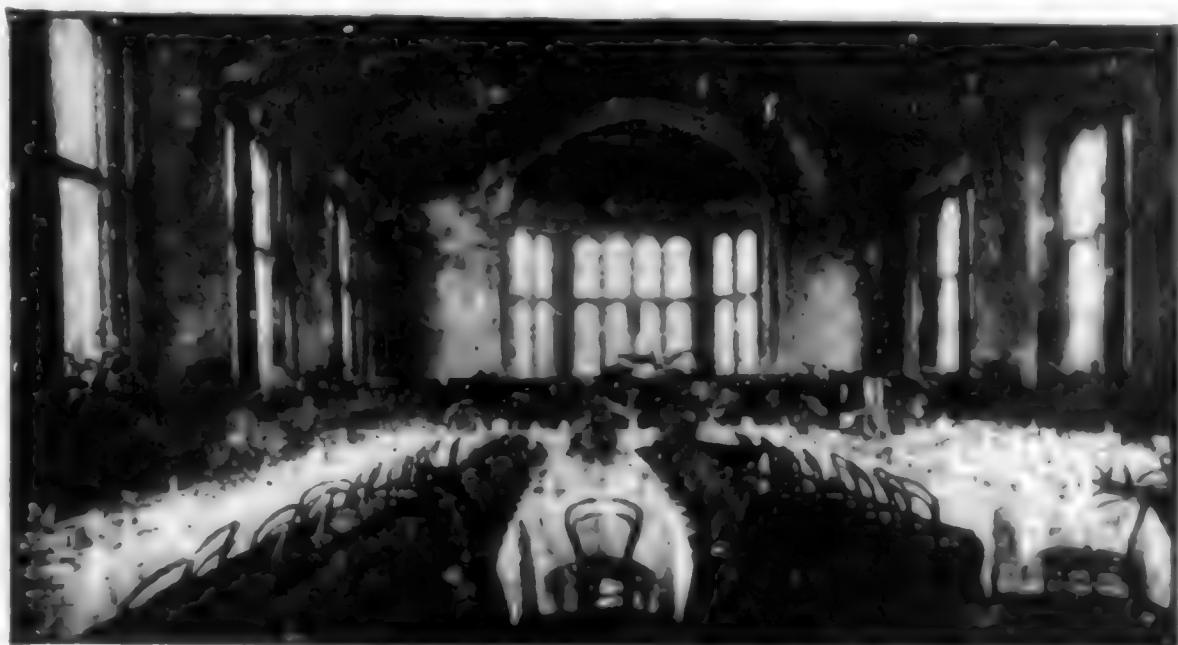
The school acquired its name, "Ley's," from the estate on which it stands. The word is pronounced "Lees," and is a common one in the vernacular of the Eastern counties. The property extends over twenty-one acres, most beautifully wooded, and beneath the shadow of the University.

A delightful walk, known as the "Bicycle Path," encircles the whole estate, measuring just upon one mile. This is a favourite haunt of Leysians, and no wonder, for it is a charming walk, and many of the boys prefer to pilot their cycles through the grove of trees to running over the Cambridge roads, which appear almost to have been made for the sport.

There are no day boys at Leys; all board at the school and dine together in the Hall behind the Head-master's house. The dormitories are improvements upon many I have seen; and are certainly models for any school to imitate, and I believe I am right in saying that the authorities of Christ's Hospital were particularly pleased with

them when they visited Leys, with the intention of viewing the school, from which to obtain wrinkles to perfect their proposed new schools in the South.

Each dormitory is scrupulously clean and kept in apple-pie order, while the boys' rugs, which they are allowed to place



GREAT HALL, ARRANGED FOR THE RECEPTION OF TWO HUNDRED VISITORS.

over their beds, give each room quite a varified and snug appearance. At the head of each bed are placed little dressing-boxes, which are sufficient to keep all the little trinkets of the schoolboys, and enable them to lay aside until the end of the term the usual wooden chests.

The school buildings form one fine quadrangle as you enter from Trumpington Road, the new science buildings, recently completed, having filled up the previous gap. The Great Hall, where all the important events connected with the school are held, is exceptionally fine.

A grand organ, which considerably adds to its beauty, takes its position in the Gallery, which is also adorned by an excellent oil painting of Dr. Moulton and three neatly-executed scrolls, the work of an Old Leysian performed in the school workshop. Throughout the



THE MUSEUM.

whole school buildings there is undoubted evidence that the sanitary arrangements have been thoughtfully studied and perfected, and the health of the boys carefully protected. Light and airy form-rooms, with an entire absence of cramming, appear a standing order, to say nothing of the capital appointments in the school kitchen, which provides good substantial food, plenty of variety, and served up to the boys without the slightest stint.

In this age of utilitarianism everything is tested by results, and the most superficial observer can test any school by the results gained on the field of the University honours and in the arena of athletics.

Two good tests, certainly, for academics and athletics ought to go hand in hand to form the character of our English youth. At Cambridge the names of Leysians have figured in the list of almost every Tripos, while a good share of

First Class Scholarships and Exhibitions have been obtained in classics, law, history, theology, mathematics and science, and two Fellowships have already fallen to their share. A University Lecturer and Examiner, and a winner and *proxime* for the Members' Prize, have hailed from the school. The number of Old Leysians who have entered the University is now considerably over one hundred.

The success in the Oxford and Cambridge Certificates Examinations, in two

years, at least, was such as to give the Leys a higher percentage of such distinction than was taken by any school except one. At London University each half-year the matriculation lists contain the names of a good number of Leysians, several high places, including the head of the list, having been captured by representatives of the school; several have passed on to the higher examinations for LL.B. and B.A. degrees; two even gaining the much-coveted Bachelor of Science degree. In honours examinations, also, Leys have put to their credit a University scholarship and a gold medal for classics.

Besides these, successes have been scored at Edinburgh and Victoria Universities, where Leys School is also well represented.

In the arduous and extensive educational labours the Head-master is sup-

ported by a large staff of assistant masters, distinguished graduates of our great Universities. Music is highly developed in the school, both choral and instrumental having much attention, and the school concerts by the Orchestral Society attract large audiences from the University. The metal workshop, a most useful and popular institution, was established under the special advice of Professor Stuart, of Cambridge.

The new Science Buildings are now



LORD KELVIN AND DR. MOULTON (HEAD-MASTER) OPENING THE NEW SCIENCE BUILDINGS.

quite one of the chief features, and I must be excused if I treat with them at length, which will compel me to shorten my remarks on the remainder of the school buildings.

The old Leysians mentioned with hilarity, at the opening ceremony, to their friends, that in their day the museum occupied a cupboard in the reading-room, and how proud they were when their collection of objects was raised to the dignity of a large room underneath the Great Hall, and how this room also became too small.

The new buildings are of red brick, with stone facings, and though not so architecturally ornate as the north block, are quite in keeping with the latter.

Entering by the door at the east end, a stone staircase leads up to the large lecture-room, now named "Kelvin Lecture Hall," and immediately facing is the entrance to the (elementary) chemical laboratory, which forms one of our illustrations. This is a fine lofty room, well lighted and well ventilated, and the fitting as perfect as at any school laboratory.



IN THE KITCHEN.

Each boy has his own cupboard, containing a set of apparatus, and the bottle racks are stocked with re-agents in bottles, with enamelled labels burnt into them, whilst the racks can be removed, and the sinks in all the tables used for troughs for collecting gases. To a specialist the most striking feature of the chemical laboratories, in all probability, would be the well-ventilated fume cupboards under four of the six windows, and the arrangements of the drains, the latter being open wooden

troughs, lined with lead, daubed with pitch and tar and suspended below the joists, covered with loose boards, so that in case of stoppage the entire drainage system can be uncovered at a moment's notice. Leaving this laboratory by the door nearest the north-west corner, we pass through a small room, used as a master's private laboratory, into the advanced chemical laboratory.

Here the fittings are such as are used for special work for Scholarship and other



THE BOYS' DINING-HALL.

examinations, affording every opportunity for continuous quantitative work. Passing through this room, we enter a small balance-room, cut off from the west end of the building, and fitted with every apparatus required for gas analysis, etc. From here we retreat to the main passage, where are the handsome biological laboratory and physical laboratory—with its slate slab mounted on a concrete column built up from the foundation—for use in experiments where great steadiness and freedom from vibration is required.

The floor above is almost wholly devoted to several small lecture-rooms, and the very excellent Kelvin Lecture Hall, together with the museum, which now contains three valuable collections of geological and mineralogical specimens, including the latest gift to the collection by C. A. Barber, Esq., the brother of an old Leys master, of a large number of fossils.

It is intended that the museum shall contain collections to illustrate the produce of various branches of commerce, and any of my readers who should feel disposed to send specimens will bestow a kindness to the school.

It should be mentioned that the authorities of Leys have received valuable assistance from the principals of other schools and several other gentlemen, in



DRYING GROUND AND LAUNDRY.

connection with the erection of these buildings, and Dr. Moulton was only too pleased to give their names prominence and acknowledge the assistance when speaking at the opening ceremony. He also said they had to thank their indefatigable secretary, Mr. Outram, who had interested himself beyond measure to make the Leys science department second to none in England, which I consider has been fully carried out.

Our second day at Leys was entirely taken up with a visit to the farm, to which we drove over in the school conveyance. This is quite a feature at Leys, and many of our schools would do well to take a leaf out of their book in this direction.

The farm is situated some three miles from the school, and for this institution I think I am right in saying, Leysians are indebted, in a great measure, to Mr. Outram's efforts. Fresh butter and eggs are supplied to the school daily, and, in fact, all the vegetables, fruit and dairy products go straight to Leys; this must necessarily be a great boon to the governors, not only from the point of economy, but from the certainty that the greater part of the boys' diet is perfectly fresh and good. Fowls are kept in hundreds, as will be seen from our illustrations, and the turkeys are fed up to give the lads a slice off the breast at the eve of our Christ-



THE FARM LAUNDRY.

mas rejoicings. The school laundry also finds a place at the farm, where the best modern sanitary arrangements are in force, and every part and parcel of the boys' linen is thoroughly cleansed before it is returned to the school. The school is also

supplied, from its own artesian well, with an unlimited quantity of the finest possible water, which comes from the lower greensand.

It was half-holiday at Leys, when Mr. Outram, with great pleasure, pointed out to us the numerous advantages the farm offered to a large public school.

Many of the boys had walked over, while others had arrived even before us, on their iron horses.

This farm was another favourite haunt for their leisure hours, and how they seemed to enjoy a roam through the vast orchard! I won't say they only looked at the fruit, and called it sour. The names of the numerous cows, too, were well known to them; even the good sty of pigs seemed to abound in interest for the young minds, while the process of churn-



MILKING IN THE ORCHARD

ing and the preparation of the forage for the cattle quite delighted them, especially if they could only lend a hand, or meddle in some small way. On our way back to school we called in at Edinburgh House, the school sanatorium, which

is distant from the school about a mile. The same careful aim at uniqueness in every particular, that characterises Leys School was fully maintained at the sanatorium. True, it was empty when I visited it, so that illustrating the interior with life, as is, in other cases, our particular wish, was pleasantly out of the question, as it spoke for itself to the healthy condition of the school.

Each room is a little ward in itself with three beds, with an electric bell to each; and the upper part is so arranged that in cases of infection it can be shut off from the ground and first floors, and approached by a separate staircase; so that such cases, should they arise, are completely isolated.

Considering the excellent tuition afforded to boys at Leys College, the charges, which are as follows, cannot be said to be heavy, and especially so if compared with some of the older foundations.

Ordinary charge for board and tuition (not including books) for boys under twelve, 30 guineas per term, and for boys over twelve, 31½ guineas, half-a-guinea ordinary medical ex-



THE FARM.—PORK FOR THE SCHOOL.

penses, one guinea for washing, and $\frac{1}{4}$ of a guinea for gymnasium (including swimming) extra. In the case of boys who are nominated by Life Donors, or Donors of the school, the charge is 10 guineas per annum, or ($3\frac{1}{4}$ guineas per term) less.

Extra charges are made for special tuition in chemistry (including the use of chemicals and the laboratories,) special instrumental and vocal music, drawing and painting in advanced classes, and for the use of the workshops (including materials and technical instruction).

There are several societies in connection with the Leys, which may be divided into three groups. In the first should be mentioned the Leysian Mission to the East End, the Leys Christian Union, the Foreign Mission Society, the Temperance Society and the Leysian Union, all bonds of meeting and working ground for Old Leysians.



THE FARM.—FEEDING THE TURKEYS.

In Group II. are the Literary and Debating Societies (senior and junior); the school publication, the "Fortnightly," gives opportunity to scholars of a literary turn and chronicles events; and the school Orchestral Society.

Group III. is last but not least in the estimation of the boys, comprising as it does the Old Leysian Football Club,



THE LEYS FOOTBALL FIFTEEN, 1893.

which is well known in the Rugby Football world, and especially so in London; also the Cricket Club, Lacrosse Club, Bicycle Club and Boat Club.

In all branches of athletics Leys School holds a proud position. The 'crosse teams are held in high repute, for on two occasions they won the Championship of the South, while Booth's cross-throw, Bainbridge's high jump and Waud's long jump have gone to form records for England.

No public school can boast of better playing-fields than Leys, and I think I am fully justified in saying that they do not only compare with the best amongst the public schools, but rank second to none of the numerous football fields in Cambridge, which has been confirmed by the University team being at all times anxious to avail themselves of "Leys" ground when resting their own.

Cricket is, of course, the game during the summer term, but of all the games football receives the greatest attention, and as the school fifteen is now gaining additional laurels, it is befitting to give the song of the season, which has been piped by many thousands of Leysians and their friends:

OPENING CHORUS.

It is not ours to spout in Greek, nor charm your ear
in Latin
(Though you know we could do so — 'tis safer to put
that in),

No triumphs of science may tune our lay, nor other
learning either,
French, mathematics, pure or mixed, we sing to you of
neither;
For, as an ancient proverb reads, "Who nothing does
but study,
His intellect will, in the end, be not a little muddy."
So now we sing of everything which charms our daily
leisures,
For every term, in constant course, brings seasonable
pleasures;
Your kind indulgence then we crave, while briefly, if
you please,
We sing those sports which bring good health and
stamina to Leys.

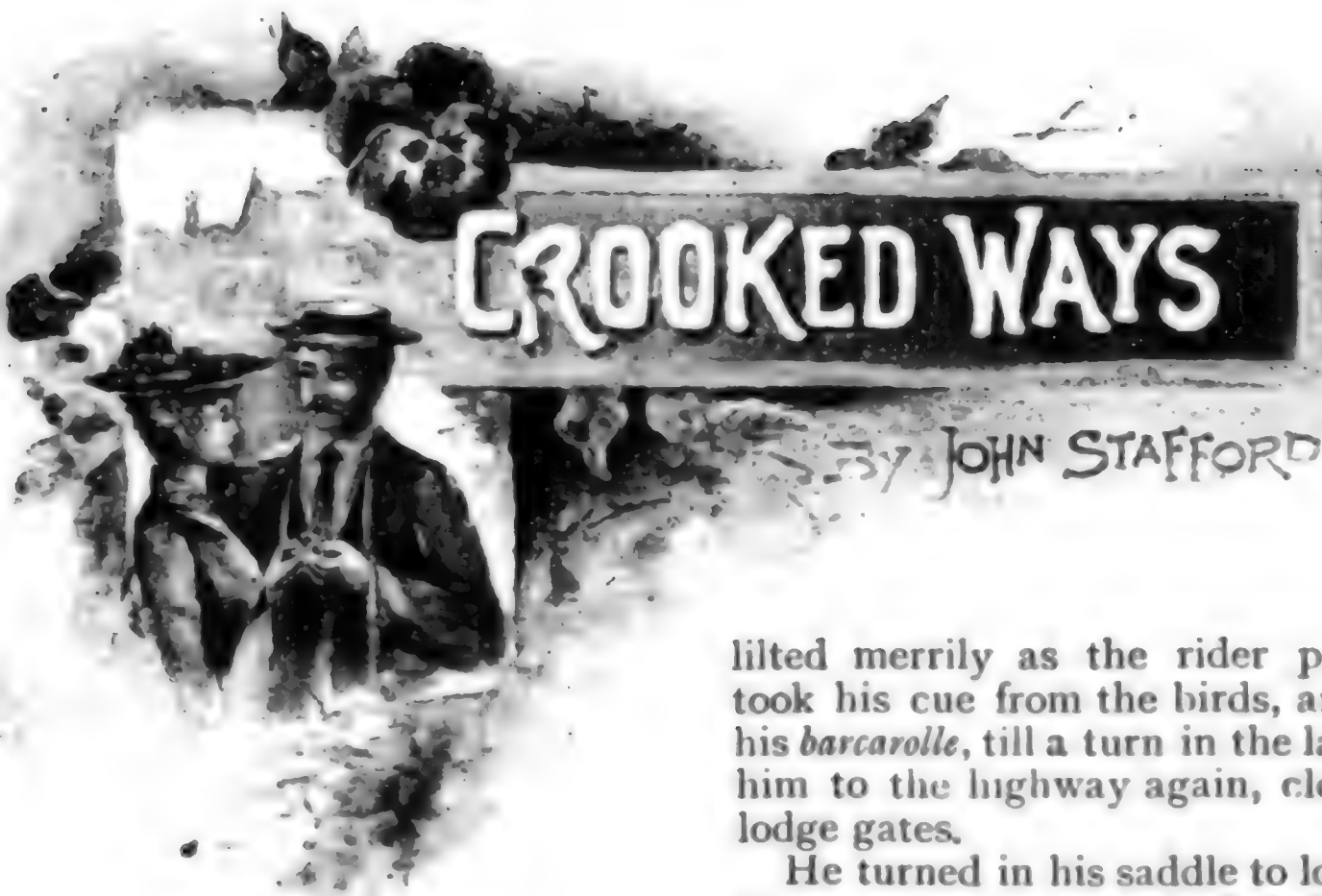
FOOTBALL SONG.

When Autumn leaves do fall
We chase the flying football;
Then ho! for the rummage of a close-packed scrum-
mage
And the grip of a healthy maul!
Chorus. Now cheer we one and all,
Hurrah for the flying football!
And, oh! for the rummage, &c.
Good kick! play up now, all!
The rival captains call,
Off side there! Drop it! Dribble, sir! Stop it!
Now, forwards! On the ball!
Chorus. Now cheer we one and all, &c.
Ho! forwards, rush it through!
Now, Leys, back up there. No!
Pick it up! Well passed! Now run there fast!
Well played, sir. Bully for you!
Chorus. Now cheer we one and all, &c.

W. CHAS. SARGEANT.

Our Illustrations are from Photographs taken specially for the LUDGATE MONTHLY by Mr. R. W. Thomas, 41, Cheapside, London, from whom Photographic Prints of the Originals can be obtained.

The following Schools have already appeared in THE LUDGATE MONTHLY:—ETON, HARROW, RUGBY, WINCHESTER, WESTMINSTER, CHRIST'S HOSPITAL, DULWICH, ST. PAUL'S, CHARTERHOUSE, WELLINGTON, MERCHANT TAYLORS', MARLBOROUGH, CLIFTON AND CHELTENHAM, and back numbers can be obtained through all Booksellers, or direct from the Office, 53, Fleet Street, London. Postage, 2½d. each.



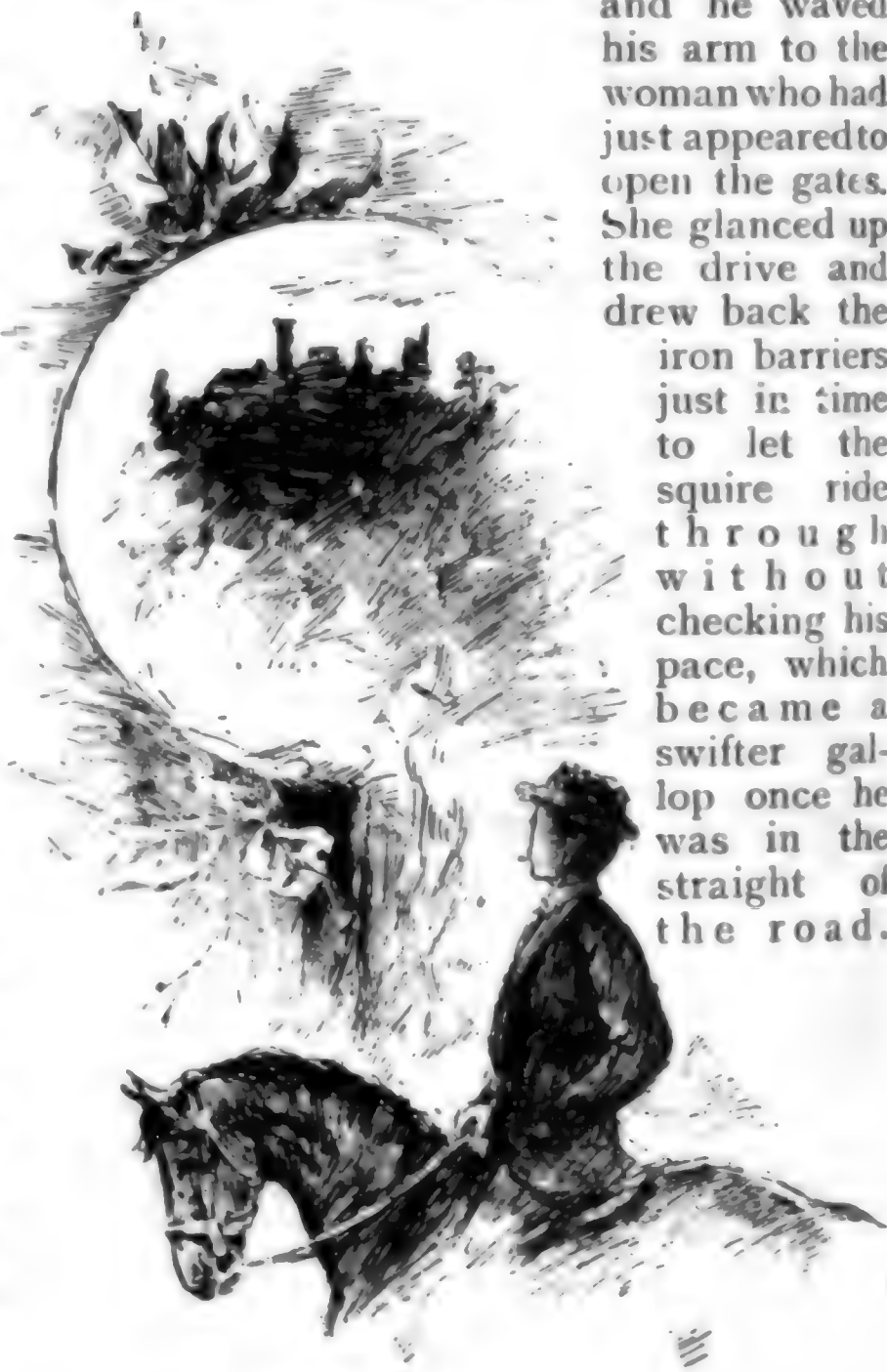
CHAPTER I.

DOCTOR GAYLEN had made his last call, and, walking his cob along the grassy margin of the road, appeared to be in no great hurry to get home. Being young—he was barely thirty—and impressionist enough to feel, without analysing, the winsomeness around him, he found it pleasant, perhaps, to play the laggard while the yellowing sun was lingering in the tree-tops, and the modest clouds, flushing beneath its amorous glare, were gathering round it, and casting a reflected loveliness on all beneath them. Earth and sky, indeed, were all that a June sunset could make them: the air was fragrant with blossom breath and tuneful with bird-voices good to listen to. The doctor began to hum himself as he turned into a bye-lane, a short cut to Barcourt. He passed the Abbey Church, a quaint little fane which local tolerance had allowed to rise again from out the larger ruin which reared its gothic windows high above it. The sound of the curfew followed him down the hill, and he looked across to the dismantled Grange as if it swung his thoughts there. In stormier days the place had sheltered a recusant Oswin, and as it stood now, grim and silent behind its weedy moat, it bore many a mark of Noll's rough usage. But the swallows twittered in the amber light, and in the chestnut trees the throistles

lilted merrily as the rider passed. He took his cue from the birds, and resumed his *barcarolle*, till a turn in the lane brought him to the highway again, close to some lodge gates.

He turned in his saddle to look through the avenue of elms which led to the present home of the Oswins. It was not an idle glance, but a long, kindly look which, perhaps, furnished the key to Lionel Gaylen's blythness to-night. His face changed, however, to sudden surprise,

and he waved his arm to the woman who had just appeared to open the gates. She glanced up the drive and drew back the iron barriers just in time to let the squire ride through without checking his pace, which became a swifter gallop once he was in the straight of the road.



HE TURNED IN HIS SADDLE.

Following him came a groom, who exchanged a broad wink with the woman as he passed.

Lionel looked after the pair curiously, but hearing the woman chuckle, he turned to her.

"Is all well at the hall, dame?"

"Ay, gallop along, gallop along," said she, not heeding his query as she gazed beneath her hand down the road. "Thought the post-bag had a sting in it, a' did. Will he catch it, think yer—the eight o'clock up?"

Barcourt station was nearly three miles away. Lionel looked at his watch. The train was due out in seven minutes.

"At the rate he is going he may just manage ——"

"But do you go, too, sir," cried Dame Hedley, as if suddenly remembering something. "Bob's bin gone this hour or more wi' a letter for yer—a letter from Miss Edith. Her left it here this mornin', an' told me not to send it till sundown. Poor wench! she's hard put to, I'm thinkin'. But her'll come back, sir; her'll come back, never yo' fear. Strange doin's, strange doin's; but the Lord 'll put 'em right, an' the Squire will have his reckonin' day, or ——"

"What on earth do you mean? Has Miss Oswin gone away?"

"Gone away! What else could she do, poor gell, an' him;—but there, I mustn't tell yer that; on'y this, doctor," lowering her voice, "on'y this, that it's not after his niece Squire Oswin's a-racin' now. But he may race. Two days, two good days—that's a fair start, aint it? Ay, yo' go too—" seeing her listener start impatiently off—"but tek it kindly, lad; tek it kindly. Her'll come back an' yer'll be happier for the partin'—the both on yer."

Lionel drew his horse in on nearing the town, and rode up the High Street at a repressive canter. In a few minutes he was in the privacy of his room, reading the following letter:

"I have been suddenly called away by one who needs me, who is looking for me now, afraid of every moment which separates me from him. I have never mentioned him, and you—deeming him dead, perhaps, as others do, have forborn allusion to him. But my father is living, and though life is a broken mirror to him, he pieces it together at times and sees truth in it. I will not say what that truth is; but it has driven him to rough measures with his keeper, and he is now in freedom, awaiting me and what love and helpfulness a daughter may bring him. But, Lionel, my heart seems divided in two, and half of it is ready to break when I try to realise what this duty means. You have come into my life, and where all was winter you have made sweetest summer; and now that I have to leave you, it seems so hard to say that it may be for a long, long time, perhaps for always. Yet, say it I must, for while my father lives I must remain with him, and there are reasons why I cannot do so and have our whereabouts known—no, not even to you.

"If you love me, you will not easily forget me; but for your own dear sake I wish now that you loved me less, that the pain of this severance might sooner leave you. But farewell, and forgive these tender words if they give your lesson a hard beginning. Forget me; submit to time's own healing, and some day perhaps my image will fade and another take its place in your heart, to grow there and make it bright, as I had hoped to do. For me, I shall learn happiness, perhaps, in living for one whose weal must grow from my sacrifice. The thought quietens me. My poor father—I am all he has in the world—I must go to him. Will you think of me sometimes—but no, no; try to forget me, do! God is looking on, and He will heal us both in His own good way. Farewell.—EDITH."



LIONEL THREW THE LETTER DOWN.

leave you. But farewell, and forgive these tender words if they give your lesson a hard beginning. Forget me; submit to time's own healing, and some day perhaps my image will fade and another take its place in your heart, to grow there and make it bright, as I had hoped to do. For me, I shall learn happiness, perhaps, in living for one whose weal must grow from my sacrifice. The thought quietens me. My poor father—I am all he has in the world—I must go to him. Will you think of me sometimes—but no, no; try to forget me, do! God is looking on, and He will heal us both in His own good way. Farewell.—EDITH."

Lionel threw the letter down with a kind of moan. It hurt him beyond measure; but with the pain there was a rising anger that he should be abandoned so entirely. Could she not have granted him one last interview, and given him a chance to understand more clearly the necessity for such a total disappearance? There was something odd and Quixotic about the whole thing, which, allied with the mystery behind it, lent a deep irritation to his sense of loss.

He sat down, chin to chest, and tried to think it out. But ratiocination was not easy, and after awhile he jumped up and walked to and fro to let his feelings have a turn. Half maddened at last, he put on his hat and made his way to the lodge.

But Dame Hedley would say very little. A letter had arrived for Miss Oswin that morning under her care, and the post-boy had gone by with the bag that evening to the Hall. Tom, the groom had returned with the two horses, and the Squire was on his way South. That was all he could gather; but she turned briskly to him as he was going.

"But dunno yo', by word or deed, doctor, try to seek 'em out. Keep among yer sick folk here, an' if yer own heart's a bit awry, why physic it wi' patience an' bide yer time. Miss Edith knows her way about, never yo' fear; an' though her may be gone for years her'll come back as sure as to-morrow's sun. Jest yo' let her be an' gie her all the rope her wants. Lend me your ear an' I'll tell yer one thing."

He walked back through the moonlight, heavy enough, but his anger was gone, and when he got home he took out her letter and reading it through again kissed it with quiet eyes.

"*Tiens ta foy*," said he, as he locked it in his desk.

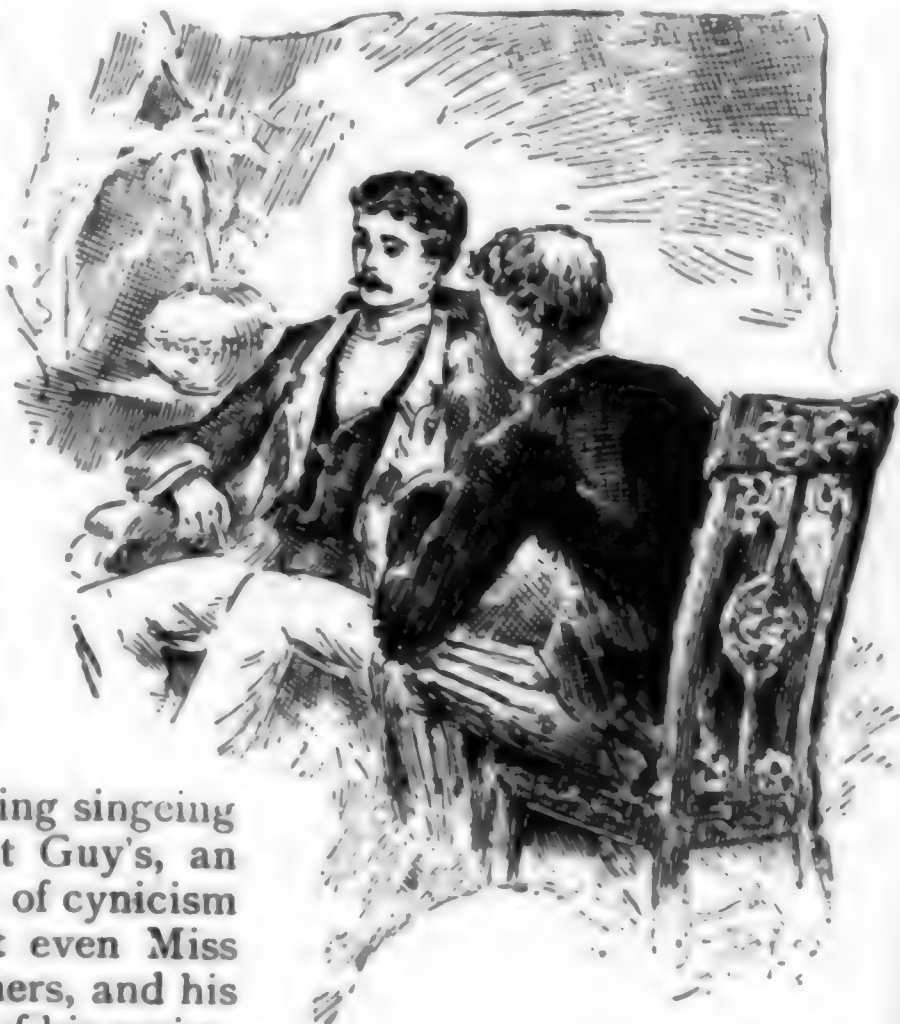
CHAPTER II.

THE young doctor was in no better case than any other Benedick who has lost his heart to a woman and then lost both. He had lived some twenty-nine years in the world without knowing more of love than a passing singeing had given him in his student days at Guy's, an experience which, having left a deposit of cynicism in his nature, had armed him against even Miss Oswin's beauty, till a recent illness of hers, and his daily attendance on her in the absence of his senior, old Dr. Lance, had led to his heart's undoing, and his

patient's too. In all the ardour, then, of a new-born passion he found it hard enough to go on week after week, hearing nothing and trying to beat against the wind of circumstance with what patch of hope he could raise to keep him going. The slow-going days made existence seem no better than a treadmill—a constant climbing to nowhere. He was afraid to think that it might always be so; hope he must, in some sort, or go mad, he told himself. So he doggedly went his rounds, cheerfully as he might, but heavy at heart the while and downright unhappy.

Squire Oswin, on his part, seemed hardly less troubled and cut up, and perhaps out of fellow-feeling he became wondrous kind to the doctor. He was a peculiar man: coarse and ill-favoured, with a choleric temper which too often broke bounds; but Lionel was not unwilling to humour him, on the chance that the acquaintance might bring him tidings of the runaways. The Squire said "runaway," never alluding to his brother, a delicacy which the other perfectly understood, and was careful accordingly.

On this footing they were enjoying a post-prandial smoke together one evening in September. Lionel sat back, staring absently into the twilight, while the Squire, puffing busily, was watching him. They had exhausted a subject, and were in a conversational interregnum. The



"A PENNY FOR THEM, GAYLEN," HE SAID.

Squire blew a great cloud and crossed his legs impatiently. He disliked silence.

"A penny for them, Gaylen," he said at last.

Lionel started; revived his languishing cigar; then looked at his host.

"No news, I suppose?"

"Not a whisper," said the Squire, sending forth another cloud. "She's as lost as a pin in a field."

He noted the pale weariness in the listener's face as he leaned back again. The Squire came to the conclusion that Lionel was no wiser than he, and he puffed more than ever in the new silence.

"It's hard on you, Gaylen, 'pon my word it is!" he burst out at length. "Looks as if she had jilted you, don't it? The little witch. What possessed her to play this prank on us both? forcing me to put detectives after her as if she had stolen the plate, and you—well, you bear up heartily, all considered. But we shall trace her yet, Gaylen. The world is only a bundle of hay, as Byron said, and if we lose a needle in it why there's finding it, if we only search long enough. D—n them both—the detectives I mean."

He jumped to his feet in a fume.

"What now?" he cried, glaring at the man servant who had just entered.

"Telegram, sir," said the man, holding the tray out nervously.

The Squire snatched the message up with a snort.

"Excuse me, doctor."

Lionel watched him open the message, and was conscious of a thrill of interest as he saw him start, and an odd light flash to his eyes. It was some seconds before the Squire sank down into his chair with a groan.

"Read it, Gaylen; read it."

He held the paper out, apparently quite unmannered. Lionel took it wonderingly.



HE FELT HIS THROAT.

The message was from one of the detectives, and hailed from Chicago.

"Lady and gentleman, answering description, killed, accident, North Pacific, month ago. Wilson."

Squire Oswin, hand over face to conceal his emotion, watched through his fingers the white features and quivering hands of his visitor as he held the paper between them and read its tidings. He saw him suddenly clutch the chair-back as if he would have fallen else; and perhaps he was sorry, for his chest heaved, and he forced something back—it was like a sob.

"Is this — is this true? Did you know they were in America?"

said Lionel, recovering himself and looking with set face at the other.

The Squire jumped to his feet.

"They! What do you mean, sir? Wilson traced her there, I suppose; but that she had a man with her, another lover, why, sir, you ——"

The rest was lost. With surprising suddenness the Doctor's hands had shot out, and had twined round the speaker's throat like steel bands.

"If you say another word I'll shake the breath from your body, you lying old scoundrel. Faugh!"

He threw the struggling figure from him with a look of loathing. The Squire fell heavily to the ground, half rose again, and then fell back and lay without offering to move.

Lionel stood a moment breathing hard and gazing with angry eyes at the prostrate man. Then he shook himself with a laugh, and reached for the water-bottle.

"Are you better?" he said, a few minutes later, as the Squire opened his eyes and stared blankly up at him. "Can you understand what I say? Take this, it will quicken your hearing."

The Squire drank the brandy willingly, but said nothing. He tried to rise, but Lionel forced him back on the cushion.

"Better lie still a bit—but listen. I shall leave here in the morning. If I find the news concerning them to be true, I shall probably never return. If it prove false, you shall hear of me, if not of them, again. In the meanwhile keep guard on your temper: you are subject to apoplexy, and I, at least, don't want you to die off just yet."

In another minute he was gone. The Squire rose to his feet, felt his throat tenderly for a moment, and then drank another bumper of brandy. He rang the bell with a low laugh.

"Saddle Meg, and fetch Hillory at once," he told the man.

CHAPTER III.

Two years went by, and it was June time again at Barcourt. The rooks chattered of it in the tree-tops; the throstles piped of it, and the busy swallows, splashing in the sheen of the higher air, presaged its fair weather. Lionel Gaylen, walking between the garlanded hedgerows far beneath, watched and listened, and was vaguely glad that all was so unchanged. For the years that had gone had seemed half a lifetime, and his altered subjectivity had cast a false light over things which made even the old scenes look strange at first. Leaving the town behind him, he had found his way into the familiar lanes; and it was to satisfy a distinct longing to be among them again, to live where Edith had lived, that he had come back to seek reinstatement with his old friend Lance. He was tired of wandering hither and

thither, and here, in the quiet old-world-ishness of Barcourt, he felt a sense of rest, as a fretful brook might when it loses itself in the peace of some shaded lagoon.

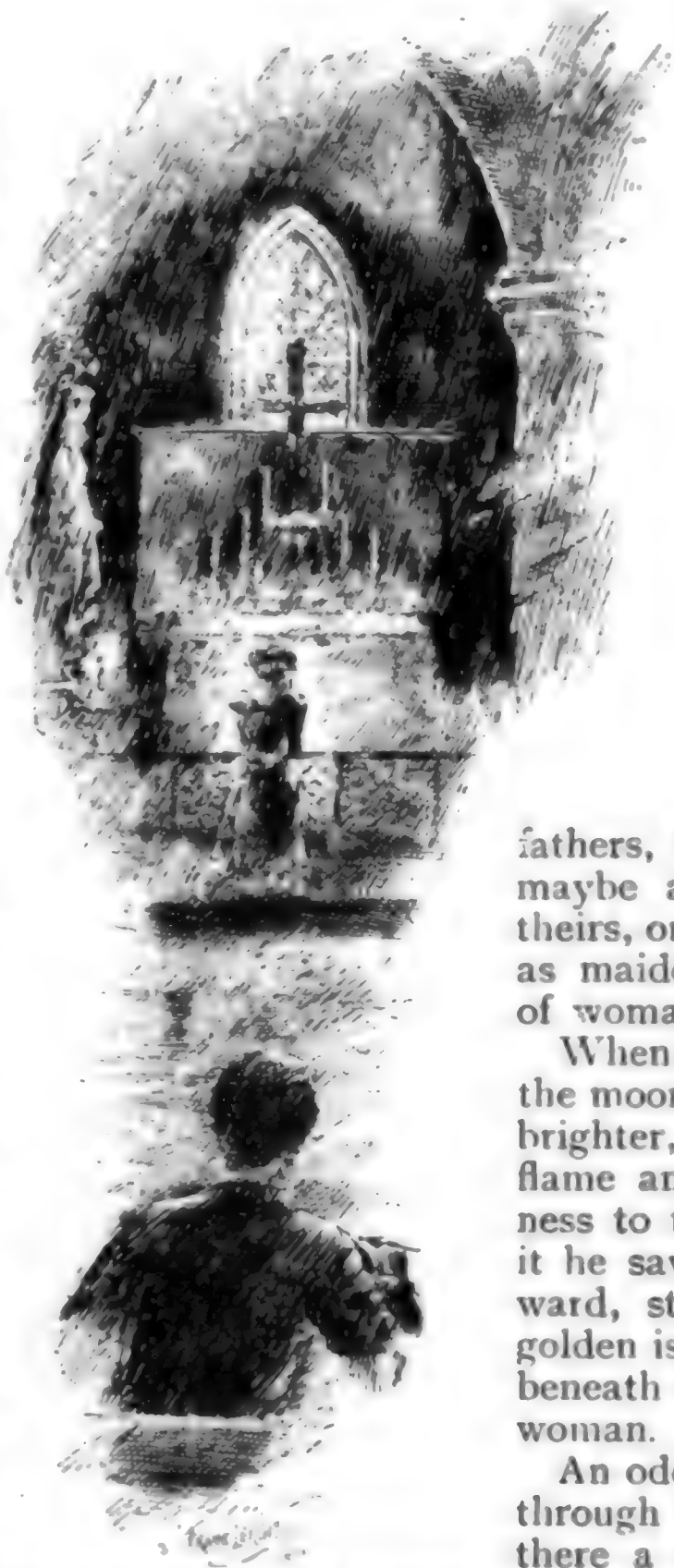
Walking musingly on, heedless of the failing light, he came to the little church by the Grange. The Oswins had worshipped there in Royalist days, and he remembered that Edith herself had liked to walk over sometimes and kneel awhile in its dim stillness. He opened the gate and walked up to the door. It was past sundown, but it might be open, and so he found it.

He went softly in and sat down near a little side chapel, in which a large crucifix hung. The aftermath showed faintly through the Western window, and through that over the altar shone the soft light of the rising moon; on the left, beneath a figure of the Virgin, a candle, left by some rustic devotee, gleamed faintly.

The silence and the dimness of the place were quietening; its associations stirred tender thoughts without quickening the pulse. Leaning back with a grateful sense of these things, Lionel closed his eyes to look in at the vision which rose up in his fancy—the slim girlish figure, kneeling saint-like with golden nimbus in the prayer-place of her fathers, her young heart stirring maybe at the ghostly touch of theirs, or with soft emotions such as maidens have on the shy eve of womanhood.

When he opened his eyes again, the moonlight over the altar was brighter, yellowing the candle-flame and lending grey distinctness to the walls; but what was it he saw there? He leaned forward, straining his eyes—a faint golden island in the greyness, and beneath it the kneeling form of a woman.

An odd sensation of awe moved through him. She had not been there a few minutes ago, he had not heard her approach; perhaps



THE KNEELING FORM OF A WOMAN.

he was only dreaming. He pressed his hand over his eyes, hardly daring to look in at what was so like a spectre, and more than half doubting his wakefulness. Feeling at last perfectly sure of it, he looked out again. The figure was gone—no, there it was in the shadow, gliding away from him. It crossed the moon-rays into the shadow on the other side, where, for an instant, it paused, looking back with white face in his direction.

He sprang to his feet and almost staggered towards it. He tried to cry out, but could not. He saw it turn and disappear behind the organ, but when he got there the recess was vacant—his hands only groped the air. His loud cry echoed strangely in the empty church.

"Edith, my loved one! where are you? It is I, Lionel. Edith! ah, she cannot hear. It was but fancy—a poor brain-freak. What has come to me, I wonder?"

He stood in the aisle, looking round dazedly. The still flame of the little candle gave now an eerie quality to the silence, which sent something like a shudder through him.

"It is this tomb of a church," he muttered, and he found his way to the door and walked out under the stars. He looked up and around. A corncrake was grating from the field near by, a bat flittered round him mockingly. He shivered again, then laughed at himself, and with a vigorous "Pshaw!" turned down the lane to Barcourt.

The diamond windows of the Lodge were bright as he passed, and, remembering the old servitor who had been Miss Oswin's nurse, he went up to see how she might be.

"Well, dame, how is the sciatica?" he said, cheerily as he could, as the son let him in.

The old lady dropped her knitting with a start. She would have risen, but he playfully pushed her back to her seat.

"Stay where you are, dame; but say something, do, or I shall doubt my welcome."

"Lord bless us!" said she, finding her voice at last.

"Amen!" added Lionel, sitting down, and holding his head in his hands distractedly.

"How are you getting on?"

"An' me a-thinkin' of yer that very minute," was her answer.

"Which reminds me of an old saying," said he, leaning back and noting the gladness in her furrowed face. "But I'm only Lionel Gaylen."

"Ay, to be sure, an' thank God for it!" she replied, looking round her. Bob had left the room. "Why ever did yer go away, lad?" turning again to him. "Better a' stayed at home all the while, 'stead o' huntin' for other folks' graves, as if there were nothin' better to do, an' the world so sick as it is! Daresay yo're sorry now as yo' never found 'em?" Her black eyes twinkled through her spectacles.

"Dunno be hurt, sir, at my way," she went on, getting no answer. "It were mortal cruel to yer, an' to all on us, 'cept the Squire; he solaced himself wi' a wife, an' a pretty piece her was, too, to run away i' that style, though there's them as don't blame her. An' now he's taken to worse ways than ever, an' near ruined th' old place. But let him have his head; there's a judgment at the lane-end; maybe a little afore it, now yo've come. He's as right as I am, doctor, an' yo're the man to prove it!"

She turned to him, tremulous with excitement.

"Who do I mean?" she went on, in answer to his question, "why Mr. Oswin, the real Squire; him as is hiding his head in th' old ruin yonder, more daft now reason's wi' him than ever he were in his mania days. God an' Miss Edith together ha' cured him, doctor, as sure —"

Lionel jumped to his feet.

"They are alive then?—they are here?—the figure in the church was not a delusion? Oh, say it again, good dame, say it again."

"Lor! how he do tek on, now," she said, almost querulously. "Sit thee down, do, an' listen quiet, like a Christian. Thought yer had a cool head, or a' might not a told yer the secret. If it were known at th' hall that he were livin' half-a-mile off, he'd be carted off to an asylum again, an' no one to say nay to the doin' of it. The Squire, as next o' kin, holds the power, an' it were 'cos he lost sight of 'em two years ago that he were so put out. Yer mind that night when he made for the station like a mad thing?"

"Yes," said Lionel, manfully holding himself in his chair.

"Well, that were two days after the escape. 'Course he was too late, for while

he was swearin' at his hirelings in Hampshire, Mr. Oswin an' his daughter were on their way to Canady. There they stayed till two months ago, when a sudden cravin', like, to see th' old scenes brought 'em both back. They've bin here just a week, an' no one the wiser but th' old priest an' my Bob an' his wife. She's there now, awaitin' on 'em. They occupy two secret rooms in the west wing, which have hidden hunted papishers afore now, an' th' old furniture there still. But bless yer! they're as happy as the day's long wi' their books an' things. He's writin' something, a history or something o' that; an' on'y larfs when I tell him how things are goin' on at th' hall. But it must not be, doctor!" she cried excitedly; "it's a sin, if ever there was one, an' Miss Edith a thinkin' of yer more than ever her did. Why—mercy save us!"

She rose suddenly to her feet, staring at the figure which stood in the doorway. Lionel turned and beheld a tall, venerable-looking man, of about fifty. He was smiling, hat in hand, and only appeared to see the woman.

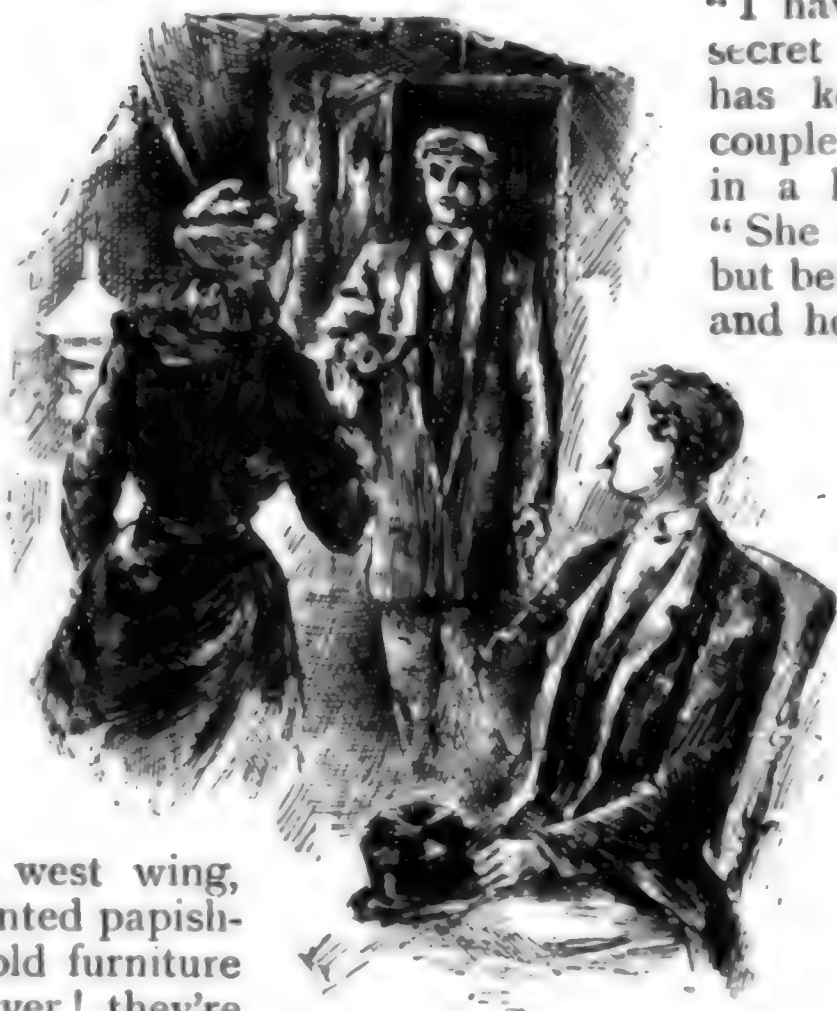
"Is this wise o' yer, sir?" she said, offering him a chair. "If yo' can on'y come out wi' th' bats yo' should keep away from th' night-owls. But this gentleman is a friend to all on us. Yo've heard, maybe, of Dr. Gaylen."

"To-night, for the first time," said Mr. Oswin, turning to Lionel with a pleasant smile; "and it was to seek you, sir, that, at some personal risk, I have extended my walk to-night. May I ask the honour of your company back with me? I will explain as we go along."

"Now God be praised!" said the dame, looking after them up the road. "If the lad don't put things right there's no sense in sane men, an' doctorin's all a fraud."

CHAPTER IV.

MR. OSWIN'S eyes glanced approvingly at his companion as they walked away.



SHE ROSE SUDDENLY TO HER FEET.

"I have learned to-night a secret which my daughter has kept from me for a couple of years," he began, in a low deliberate voice. "She is very dear to me, but behind her loving ways and her gentleness I never suspected that she had a deep sorrow of her own. She never spoke of it, and though her manner has been a little *triste* at times, I ascribed it to our position and other things, having myself known melancholy through thinking of them. To-night, in announcing my intention of leaving here, I observed tears in her eyes and

a suppressed agitation which at first puzzled me. When I asked her what it meant she only fell on my shoulder and sobbed, unable to say a word. In doing so the locket at her neck fell to the ground and opened, showing a face quite unknown to me, but which I am glad to have alongside me now."

Lionel bowed.

"As gently as I could I got the truth from her," proceeded Mr. Oswin. "It seems she had seen you in the church to-night, and, fearing to speak with you, had fled by the passage which connects it with the Grange. She heard you cry her name, and judged by that you were still true to her. The incident unhinged her, naturally, hence her emotion when I spoke of leaving. Now, I love my daughter as only a father can; but I cannot allow her happiness to be sacrificed to my unfortunate situation. Between us, I think, we might preserve it without her feeling that she is wronging either party. Your name and family are known to me, and I give my full and glad consent to your suit."

He offered his hand.

"How can I sufficiently thank you?" was all Lionel could say as he gripped it.

"There are difficulties in the way," Mr. Oswin continued; "and perhaps the best way to explain them is to go back to their beginning."

He walked on a few yards in silence, a look of pain in his face as memory worked back to the starting-place of all his troubles.

"My wife was a Roman Catholic," he began, "the daughter of an Italian lady I met at Florence. I married her against my father's wish, and I am sorry to say we quarrelled so seriously on the subject that he commanded me never to approach his presence again. He cut off my allowance and we came to London, where, on a small annuity my wife enjoyed, and some earnings from my pen, we were able to live a quiet, but sufficiently happy life. We lived for each other and our child; and each year—but I need not dwell upon it. She was snatched away from me when Edith was four years of age. My grief was very great, and for months I was inconsolable. In the midst of the trouble my brother visited me. Perhaps my conduct appeared odd to him. We had always been much estranged, and at that painful time his presence was an irritant I had hard work to brook. I avoided him, and kept my room all I could. One day, whilst I was in the middle of one of the painful outflowings which sometimes carried me away, and quite unconscious of everything about me, Robert entered with two gentlemen, whom he introduced as friends of his. I was surprised by the intrusion, and only sat in moody silence, but conscious of a rising anger against my brother's flippant manner, which at last got the better of me, and brought me to my feet in a state bordering on frenzy. I commanded them all three to leave the room. They did so, but I remember Robert's smile as he turned at the door and bowed himself with mock ceremony from my presence. I never saw him again. In two days,

on the evidence of two practitioners—my late visitors—my person was seized, and I was taken to a private asylum, where, thanks to the care to make me so, I really did lose my reason, so that when the lunacy inspector came I was as *bonâ fide* a case as he could wish for. But, as time went on, I enjoyed occasional intervals of rightmindedness which made me feel my position acutely. In one of these mental oases I explained my case to the inspector, but nothing came of it. So the years

went on, till one day I attacked my keeper as we were walking in the garden. Leaving him stunned I made my escape, and found my way to Heniton, over the hill yonder. There I learnt that my father had been dead many years; that my brother had charge of the estate; and that he had adopted and reared my daughter—why, I know not, unless it was to blind people. He never spoke of me, and the belief grew that I was dead. But Edith knew otherwise, and I wrote her, care of Dame Hedley (a trustworthy old soul, who was also in the secret, but

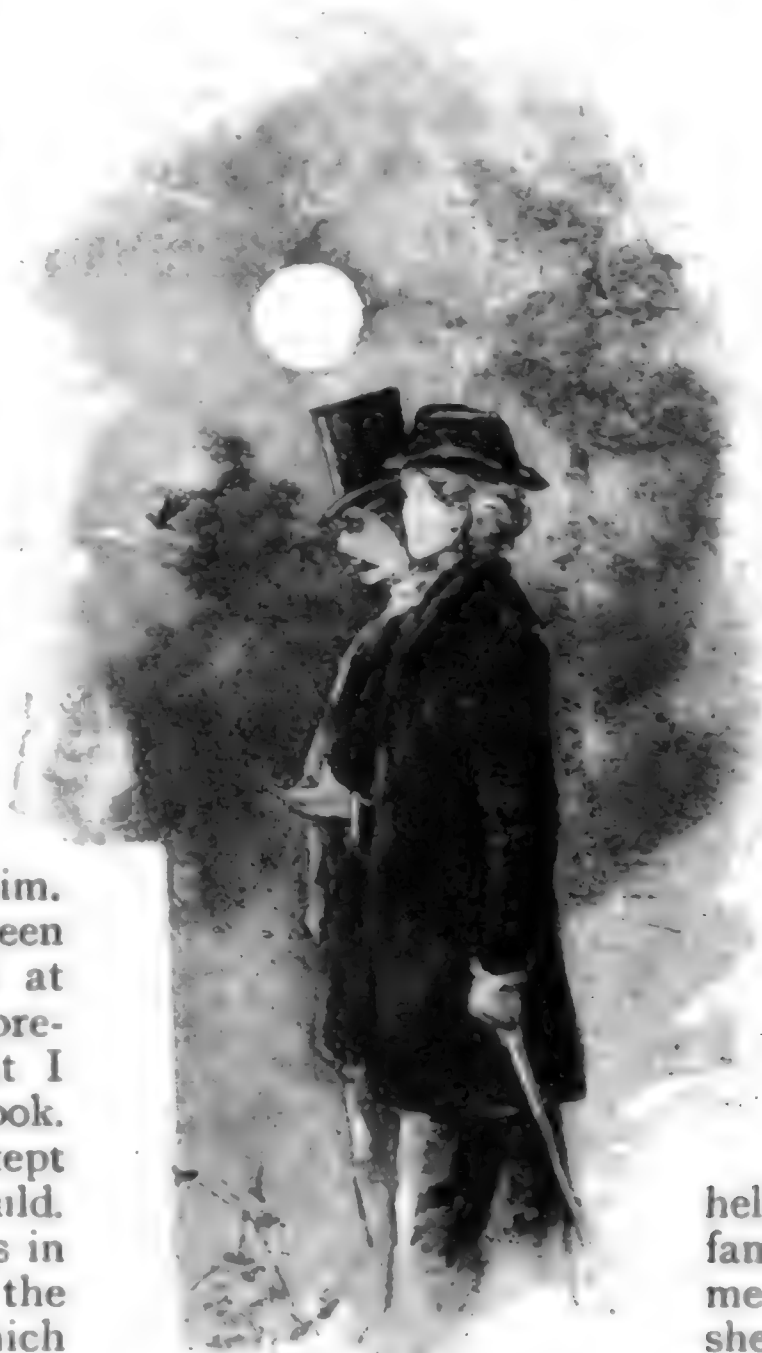
held her tongue for the family's sake), to come to me. To shorten the story, she came, and we went at once to America. There I placed myself under the charge of a brain physician,

who, without entirely curing me, did lessen the frequency of my attacks. I have been without a lapse now for several months."

Lionel looked up in surprise.

"In the course of a year or so," the other went on, "I may be sufficiently recovered—there is no knowing—to get medical testimony that I am *compos mentis*, and in a fit state to take my proper social position. In the meanwhile the estate is protected by Chancery, and no great harm —"

"But you forget, sir," put in Lionel,



HE OFFERED HIS HAND.

"legal evidence of your death, two years ago, placed the property in your brother's possession, and there is talk in the town of the last bit of land being mortgaged in a day or two. The position is serious and requires your instant intervention."

Mr. Oswin paused in his walk, surprise and pain in his face.

"Does villany go so far?" he said at last. "Dame Hedley was right, then; it is the land he is squandering as well as the income; yet, if I intervene, my liberty will be at stake; my hope of recovery will be gone; my—Oh! it is too cruel!"

They walked on in silence till they came to the church.

"However, we will talk it over again," said Mr. Oswin, with a sigh. "Our safest way is by the passage. It has become the privilege of an Oswin to use a conspirator's burrow in order to get to his hall."

He smiled bitterly as he looked carefully round before entering. In a minute more he had opened a small door in the woodwork at the back of the organ, made by the builders, evidently, to afford ingress to the instrument.

Asking Lionel not to move, he stooped for a lantern. He drew back the slide, and a yellow bar of light shone out, revealing at his feet an old stone staircase, the slab covering of which lay near.

In the space of a few minutes they were standing in a long, half-roofless gallery, with worm-eaten wainscot and rotting floors.

"It is not all so bad as this," said Mr. Oswin, turning into a large apartment on the right, which was also wainscoted. They were half across it when a panel was drawn back, and Miss Oswin appeared.

"Oh, *padre* dear, I'm so afraid of these nocturnal walks. Have you enjoyed it? How tired you look!"

Lionel, standing unob-

served in the shadow, made by the light from the inner room, felt a quick thumping within him which was almost painful. The sight of her, the sound of her voice, her whole beautiful presence, struck his senses with a kind of shock.

"Nay, not so hasty," said Mr. Oswin, playfully resisting her gentle pulling to the door. "Guess what Prospero has found in the moonlight and brought hither to his prison-flower."

Edith looked up at him curiously, then something directed her vision over his shoulder, and her grasp tightened on her father's arm.

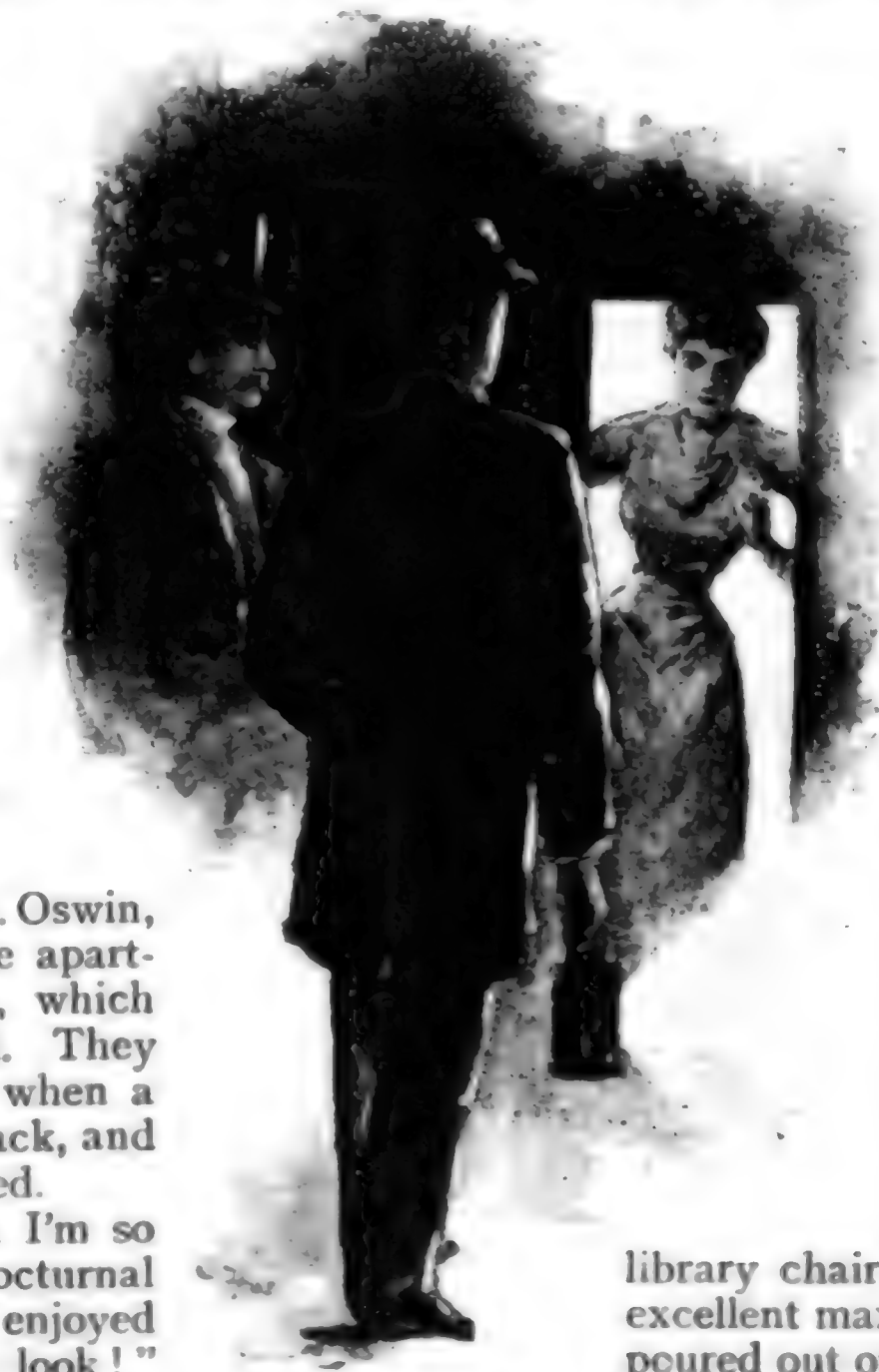
"No cause for trembling, lassie," said he gently. "Come forward, doctor, and be a tree to this tendril. Ay, it's he, girl. Let him have you—I know all about it, and I know what love is—there she goes! God bless them both!"

He quietly withdrew, leaving them in the shaft of light, unconscious of everything but the happy tumult within them, and the glad eye and lip-service, which are love's own dumb-talk.

CHAPTER V.

THE young doctor was very busy during the next three days. So too, were Lawyer Hillory and his surveyor—with much headshaking and sad comment, from Barcourt. The Squire also was busy—with the bottle. His life lately had become more and more bacchanalian, and, from an occasional devotee, he had become a slave to the wine-god. But on Thursday afternoon his lawyer was due, and the Squire always believed in business before pleasure. As he sat expectant in his

library chair, he thought what an excellent maxim that was; and he poured out only half a glass more, with a sense of self-repression



A PANEL WAS DRAWN BACK.

which perhaps emphasized the smack of his lips.

"Show him in," he said to the man, when the solicitor was announced.

He sat back in his chair, and tried to focus his gaze on the inkstand. His brows drew closer together with the effort, and as a further test he slowly extended his forefinger, making it travel somewhat spirally to the object in his view.

"Sober as a judge," said he, looking as grave as one as he leaned back again. "Well, Hillory," turning to the door as that gentleman appeared. "glad to see you, Hillory. Pour your-

self out a drop of wine and hand me the deeds. I'll be looking through them while the grape warms your old blood. Got any blood, Hillory, or are you sheepskin throughout?"

The Squire always laughed at his own humour, and he did now into a severe fit of coughing. This enabled the lawyer to unfasten his bag and take out the documents without further comment from his client. Mr. Hillory was a meek little man, long accustomed to the Squire's peculiar manner, and preferring not to take umbrage where so much good profit was.

"Why did you make me laugh?" growled the Squire, snatching up the papers and tearing the tape from them. "What is all this talk about the Grange being haunted? Heard anything of it?"

Mr. Hillory said that it had not come to his knowledge; but the Squire, glaring along the lines of the mortgage, appeared not to catch the answer and only said a loud "Eh?"

"It has not come to my knowledge," repeated Mr. Hillory in a louder voice; "but it is possibly only some idle tale."

"Idle tale!" muttered his client, still reading on till he came to the end of the page, when he looked up. "Idle tale! Why, one of the keepers swore to me that while he was watching for those

rascally poachers the other night, he saw a man's face so like my father's, who lies now in the vault yonder, that he had half a mind to drop his gun and leave the hares to their luck. And Tom is a strong-minded fellow, and wouldn't tell a lie to save his neck. That's more than you can say, Hillory. What's this?

Only twelve hundred for the West Uplands, and all that timber! zounds, man! it's giving it away."

And so began a discussion on the merits of the valuation, which lasted some time

and not to the improving of the Squire's temper. At length he reached for his pen and dipped it into the ink, preparatory to signing.

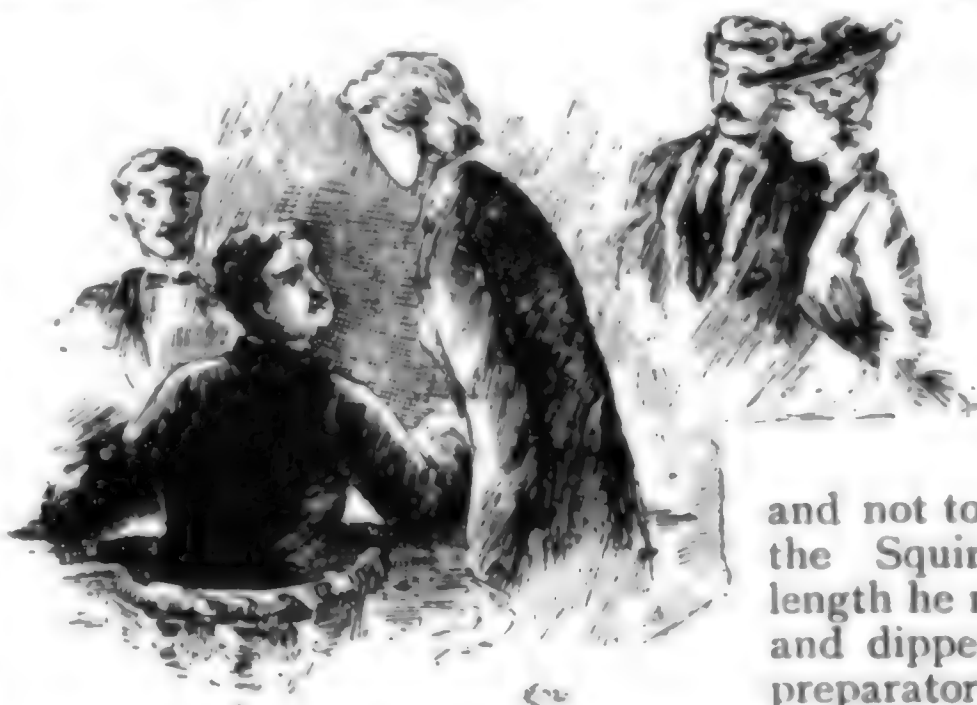
"What now?" he cried angrily, as the man appeared with the salver. "Away with you! Let them wait, whoever it be. Don't you see I'm engaged."

The man began to stammer an explanation, but disappeared just in time to escape Mr. Hillory's bag, which had been flung at him.

"Deuce take the people!" said the Squire, appeasing himself with another glass of Martelle, and taking up his pen again.

He dipped it into the ink and drew his brows together for the act of signing. Then slowly the quill began to creak through his name. But it was stopped midway: a long, thin hand had closed over the Squire's and held it prisoner.

"Gently, Robert, gently," said a low voice. For some seconds there was perfect stillness in the room. The lawyer sat glued to his chair; the Squire glared wildly up at the face at his elbow, while Lionel and Edith stood aside, wondering whether he was struck dumb in his fright. They both started as he suddenly jumped to his feet with a fearful cry, and shrank away from the mild eyes of his brother. Edith clung to her protector, who, however, pushed her gently aside and made a step forward. His eyes were anxiously fixed on the Squire, in whose breast mingled fear and astonishment were fast condensing into ungovernable rage.



THE SQUIRE GLARED WILDLY UP.

"Calm yourself, Squire, for heaven's sake!" cried Lionel.

But the Squire appeared not to hear him. His limbs bent as if for a spring, but, instead of leaping forth, as he appeared on the point of doing, he only gave a guttural cry and fell heavily forward into his brother's arms.

* * * *

Lionel drew the weeping girl to him, and kissed her forehead gently. He had found her in the drawing-room, whither she had flown to escape the hushed bustle of the household.

"But it was so horrible," she said, in reply to his entreaty to dry her tears. "He was not wholly bad, dear, and was often good and kind to me; it would have been so much nicer could he have given up possession quietly and gone away to live. He would not have wanted for money, for you know how kind poor father is. But where is he? Let me go to him."

Lionel restrained her.

"He desires to be alone for a short time, and asked me to join you. He is rather cut up. It does seem a pity that his new liberty should have such a sad beginning. But you must not let it oppress you so. In a few weeks' time, when the incident will be farther from you, you will look at it more calmly. Now kiss me again, and we will walk in the garden before the sun is quite gone. There is peace there: let us take the hint from Nature.

"Ay, there they be," said Dame Hedley, seeing the twain from the bedroom, where she had just finished the first offices

of the death-chamber; "an' the Lord sees 'em as well as me, an' He knows it's for the best, for all His rough dealin' this day. Ay, it were His will; but eh, eh! I wish the Squire could a' said a prayer of his own, 'stead o' leavin' it all to us. It were o'er sudden, it were, an' after such a life too. He ——"

She looked suddenly back into the room, having heard footsteps. Mr. Oswin was standing by the bedside, contemplating the still remains of his brother. The dame, who had known them as boys together, guessed his thoughts, and, with an old servitor's freedom, broke in upon them and drew him gently to the window.

"Look on the living as well, sir, an' remember all that has passed. There they be, and he's givin' her a sprig o' heartsease. It's the colour of her own eyes, as are turned to yer now, with the dew in them both. Pore gell, her's as sad as yo' be; but there! yo'll all be cheery again 'fore the carn's i' the ricks, an' ——"

"Yes, yes, dame. Leave me awhile, do. I'm in no humour for talk. Go."

Something in his manner silenced the woman, and she left him without more words. But when the lovers re-entered the drawing-room a little later, they found Mr. Oswin awaiting them. Edith ran to him, and he smiled down at her as she looked up caressingly.

"Nay, I'm not so sad, Edie. But we must think kindly of him in the happiness that is coming. Take her, Gaylen, and let us forget this affair as soon as may be. Crooked ways cannot be always straightened without a wrench at the start. God keep you both!"

Dundee and Whisky Distilling.

"To the Lords of Convention 'twas Claverhouse spoke:
'Ere the King's crown goes down, there are crowns to
be broke;
Unhook the West Port and let us gang free,
For it's up wi' the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee.'"

PERHAPS no County in Scotland presents more striking or finer scenery than Forfarshire. From the variety of highland and lowland, of inland and marine, of hill-protected strath and caverned headland, frowning on the ocean, of mountain waterfall and placid and pellucid estuary, it may be said that Forfarshire naturally exhibits such picturesque scenes as would delight the heart of the most fastidious lover of nature.

Had we been asked in our childhood days for what Dundee was famous, there is no doubt but that, with that unanimity so delightful to behold in children, we would have answered—"Marmalade." As years rolled on, and many of us had entered the fields of commerce, we would, in reply to the same query, have said, "Jute, or whale-oil and whale-bone." As we got riper and more experienced, we would have felt inclined to boldly stake our opinion on "Whisky!"

Thinking that a chatty paper on the national beverage of Scotland would be both instructive and interesting, I hied myself one morning by the ten o'clock express from King's Cross to Dundee. By the way, what an excellent and luxurious train that express is, to be sure. One glides out of King's Cross, and having passed through Finsbury, your engine-driver "lets her go," and you make yourself comfortable in the corner of your well-cushioned "smoker," and read. No chance of being disturbed every few minutes at different stations. You stop so seldom: only at Grantham, York, Newcastle, Berwick, Edinburgh and Dundee.

It is useless to search for the origin and history of the use of whisky, and encyclopædias throw but little light on the subject. Rightly or wrongly, Scotland is credited with having whisky for its national beverage. I think Robbie Burns is to be

blamed for this to a great extent. It has, moreover, now become one of the chief—indeed, one might say *the* chief—articles of commerce; and the revenue derived from the distillation of spirits in Scotland is by no means a small item in the yearly Budget.

Who the first genius was that discovered it, and his precise method of distillation, have been buried in the dim and distant mists of antiquity. Tradition tells us that the Arabians were the first distillers. East Indians have had, from time immemorial, a manufactured spirituous liquor called "arrack." Whether Scotland or Ireland really was the first to adopt the art must remain a moot point. The earliest name it had was "Aqua Vitæ." The Gaelic name, Uisqe-beatha, became in time Anglicised into whisky. The Irish called it Usquebaugh, both the terms meaning strong water. As far back as the sixteenth century the Irish had a drink called "builcan," from "buile" (madness) and "ceaun" (the head)—truly, an appropriate name.

In 1661 a duty of fourpence a gallon was imposed, and this duty has steadily gone on increasing. Indeed, it is one of the safest sources of revenue to a perplexed Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Everybody having heard of that celebrated brand of Scotch known familiarly as J. R. D., I thought a visit to the warehouses of John Robertson and Son, and a chat with the firm, would give me ample matter for this article, and that I was right in my surmise passes without comment.

It appears that little or no whisky is consumed as it comes direct from the distillery, but that the produce of various distilleries are blended together in certain proportions until the desired effect—a rich, mellow, full-flavoured mixture—is the result, a result which, like a well-known article, is both "grateful and comforting."

It would be, no doubt, better to start at the very beginning—from the time the bar-



MR. JOHN ROBERTSON, SEN.



MR. JOHN ROBERTSON

ley grows in the field till it ultimately, in a liquefied and extracted form, leaves the warehouses of John Robertson and Son as their celebrated three-star J. R. D.

There is an old and trite saying that, in making hare soup it is first necessary to catch your hare. So it is with whisky. To have it good, it is first necessary to obtain your barley, and see that you obtain it of good and uniform quality. Though a great deal of barley is imported from the Black Sea and the Continent, Scotch barley is still out and away the best. Well, having obtained your barley, the first process through which it passes is that of steeping. It is put into large tanks of water for two or three days. Taken from this, it is then spread on the floor of the malt-house, where it lies for nine or ten days; and during this time it is frequently turned so as to cause the grain to germinate regularly. When the germ has grown sufficiently, that is, nearly as long as the grain, the sprouted barley is put into the kiln to dry.

A word or two about the kilns and fuel. Large iron floors (perforated) are used to spread the malt on, while underneath are lit huge fires. No doubt every one is aware that Scotch whisky always has, in a more or less marked degree, a decidedly smoky flavour. This flavour is imparted to the malt by the judicious mixture of peat with the coal and coke used to fire the kilns. The greater the proportion of peat used, the more marked the smoky flavour, and thus the degree of smokiness can be regulated to a nicety. The malt is then passed into the mill to be ground, and thence to the mash-tun. This tun is furnished with a false perforated bottom, and the hot water flows up into the malt from below. Three waters or watery extracts are drawn off during this process of mashing — the first in about an hour, the second in two hours and the third in six hours. During this period of manipulation all the saccharine element of the malt is extracted, and the result is that a thick wort or wash is formed.



MR. W. B. ROBERTSON, J.P.

This is drawn off and allowed to cool, and is then passed into vats called the wash-backs, to allow the process of fermentation to take place. From the wash-backs the wash is run into the wash-charger, thence to the wash-still, where the first process of distillation begins. The wash is a thick, spirity liquid, and during the process of distillation it requires to be constantly stirred up to prevent the matter in suspension settling on the bottom of the still, where it would very soon become burned and affect the flavour of the whisky, making it still burnt (or *singed*).

The distillate is condensed, and is termed "low wines," and is run into the "low wines" receiver.

From thence it passes to the spirit-still and is distilled into whisky. The spirit as it condenses and passes off is beautifully clear. Directly it shows the slightest trace of milkiness on the addition of water it is cut off and the residue passes back to the "low wines" for re-distillation. The difference of the strengths here is worthy of notice. The "low wines" is about 12 deg. or 13 deg. under proof, the whisky after distillation is about 20 deg. over proof. The whisky then is mixed with a certain proportion of water to reduce it to the legal strength, 11 deg. over proof, and is drawn off into casks and placed to mature in due course in the bonded warehouse.

After the whole of the spirit has been removed the residue is known as "pot ale," and formerly was run into the sewer, but nowadays it has to be got rid



THE BONDED WAREHOUSE.

of in some other way, as it was a source of pollution to streams. It is now found to be excellent top-dressing for various crops. Pigs and cattle drink it greedily.

Every stage of the manufacture is constantly and jealously watched by Excise officers, and due note is made of every gallon distilled.

The journey to Kirkcaldy and back to Dundee enabled me to obtain a good view of the beautiful river Tay, and to cross and recross the famous Tay Bridge. I need not go back to the sad history of the old bridge, which is now so well known, telling you how a terrible catastrophe happened on the evening of Sunday, the 29th December, 1879, when the Edinburgh mail train, with the whole of the high girder spans, were blown by the fierce

storm into the river, or how not one of the ninety passengers escaped to tell the tale to the horrified town of Dundee. The new bridge is somewhat lower than the old one, and has a double line of rails, the former only having the single line. All that human knowledge and ingenuity could do has been done to render this new bridge proof to the wildest storm that might rage. The Tay Bridge is the largest bridge in the world, being between two and three miles in length. The accompanying illustra-



WASHING BOTTLES.

tions give one some idea of the old bridge after the accident, and the present structure.

Having explained briefly the rudiments of the manufacture of whisky, I now come to that far more important and difficult part—that of true and accurate blending.

The firm of John Robertson & Son consists of but two: Mr. W. Brown Robertson, a Magistrate for the County of Forfarshire and a Trustee for the Harbour of Dundee, and his younger brother, Mr John Robertson. The firm was

established in the early years of the present century by the father of the present members of the firm.

Like all gigantic concerns, the beginning of J. R. D.—to call them by their familiar trade mark—was very small, and confined entirely to the local trade. With that energy and ambition which is a characteristic of the Scotchman, they decided on extending their connection, first with the Australian Colonies; and, having every confidence in the qualities of their various blends, they launched boldly forth into what has proved to be one of the largest and most successful businesses of the Scotch whisky trade. J. R. D. boomed over the whole of the East, and orders came in so rapidly that

they possess one of the finest and best equipped bonded stores in the world.

The warehouses, which are under the Customs, are of five and seven floors, and contain many thousands of casks of all sizes, representing something like one million gallons, which is all old, well-matured



THE OLD TAY BRIDGE, AFTER THE ACCIDENT.

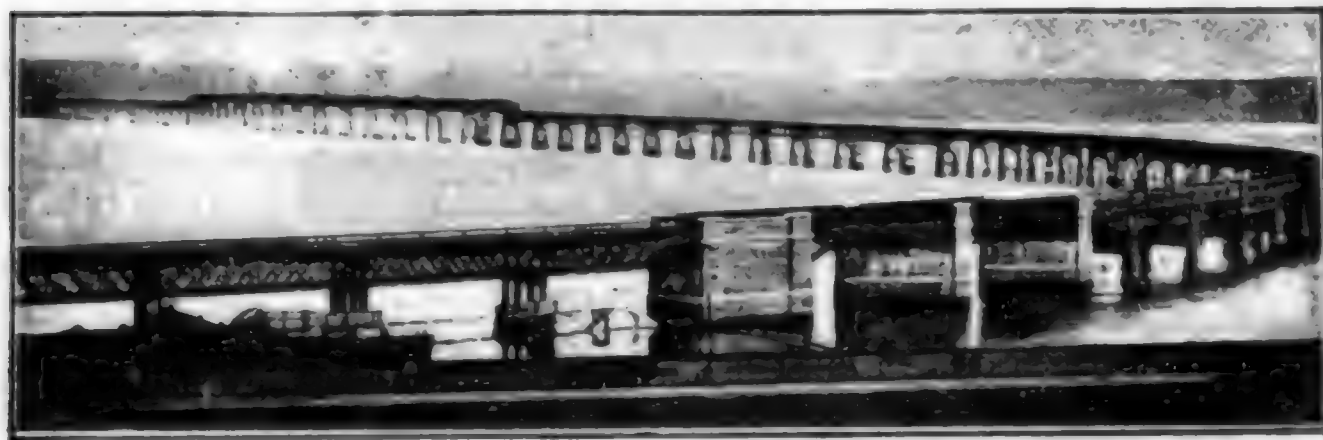
spirit, ready for immediate use, for the bottling of the J. R. D. But large as the quantity may seem, it only forms a very small portion of their immense stocks, which are lying at all the most noted Highland distilleries, maturing previous to their being brought to Dundee to be blended, which is really the art of producing fine whisky.

The greatest difficulty is experienced in getting the various makes of whisky to blend thoroughly together, and the antiquated "plunger," which had been for many years in use, had to give way to the inventive genius of one of the members of the firm, who, after many years spent in experimenting, devised machinery which now accomplishes the work most successfully.

The machinery, which is a secret, and only known to the heads of the establishment, is driven by a powerful Crossley gas engine.

The art of blending lies in not allowing one whisky to predominate over

another, and when one is told that there are scores of different whiskies used in the composition of J. R. D., it is easy to form some idea of the enormous difficulties to be overcome. I may mention, in passing, that all the work is carried on under the supervision of a large staff of Her



THE NEW TAY BRIDGE.

the bonded warehouse accommodation was taxed to the utmost. So much did the business increase that it became necessary to erect an additional warehouse; but no sooner had they the one warehouse completed than they were obliged to extend and extend, until now

Majesty's revenue officers, which is a most important detail in these days of adulteration. We now turn our steps to the bottling department, where a busy scene meets the eye, and where the transformation of the whisky from the bulk to the bottle is accomplished. The whisky, after being reduced to the re-

quired strength in one of the enormous vats, is passed through filters to ensure its being thoroughly clean and pure. The spirit then passes to the filling machines, where twelve bottles are filled at a time. They then find their way to the corking machines, after which, they are capsuled, examined, labelled, re-examined, wrapped, strawed and cased, marked all ready for shipment. The bottles pass from hand to hand with clockwork regularity, and although the warehouse is only open seven hours a day, yet they can turn out about one thousand dozen a day.

During my visit shipments were being prepared for Adelaide, Auckland, Christchurch, Cape Town, North and South America, Calcutta, Bombay, Melbourne, London and other markets.

Adjoining their bonded stores they also have extensive warehouses for the carrying on of their duty-paid department, where everything necessary and requisite for the carrying on of their business is stored. The first floor is principally occupied with some twenty-four large vats, where orders for the home trade are executed. The bottle-washing department is remarkable



CASE MAKING.

for its completeness. It is fitted up with three patent bottle-washing machines, which are driven by another Crossley gas-engine. Fifteen thousand bottles per day can be washed with these machines, and, as all the bottles used for J. R. D. are new, every care is exercised in the handling and tho-

roughly cleansing of them. The other floors are occupied in storing capsules, bottles, corks, straw envelopes, etc.

To enable the firm to carry on such an extensive business, it is absolutely necessary, for the satisfaction of themselves, that all the work should be done on their own premises, and, in addition to their large staff of men and girls, they also employ a number of coopers and joiners.

Every cask used must be made from thoroughly matured and seasoned wood, and, to ensure its cleanness and sweetness, it is the rule that each cask must pass through the hands of the head cooper.

In the joiners' shop, where there is sufficient wood to stock a well-equipped woodyard, everything is gone about with precision. Each case is branded with the well-known J. R. D. brand, and is dressed and finished off with astonishing celerity.

J. R. D. is becoming quite a family word. Wherever Spiers and Pond, the well-known caterers, are to be found, there also is J. R. D. Visitors to Constantinople in London, at Olympia, will find J. R. D., and J. R. D. whisky only at all the bars. Theatres



THE SAMPLE FLOOR.



BOTTLING CELLAR.

have it, railway stations keep it, and stores in all four quarters of the globe stock it. That the medical fraternity recommend and prescribe good Scotch whisky is a well-known fact. An eminent member of the fraternity in England, in describing J. R. D., called it "The choicest product of Scotland." If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then, indeed, J. R. D. should be blessed, for they have been gifted with more than their share, for time and again has the firm been obliged to prosecute unscrupulous traders for passing off inferior whisky as the "Simon Pure."

Any anxious enquirers after J. R. D. can find it by applying to the London office, 4, Great Tower Street, where the genial manager, Mr. Cooksey, will attend to their wants.

Talking of this reminds me of a few facts I gleaned while in conversation with Mr. Robertson. There are in Scotland working no less than one hundred and thirty distilleries. The broad

difference between Scotch and Irish whisky is that Scotch whisky is made from malt; Irish has a percentage of oats in its manufacture, and the essential oil of the oats predominates, so as to give the Irish its own peculiar flavour. The great thing to do in obtaining whisky is to get it well matured and good. German spirit and potato spirit are both chemically purer alcohol than whisky, but they both contain some form of ether that is most pernicious and deleterious to the human system.

Dundee is a famous, and also an historical, town, and contains in or around many objects of beauty and interest. The chief one is the old Steeple, erected most probably towards the end of the fourteenth century, though tradition says that it was erected by David, Earl of Huntingdon, two centuries earlier. It is a stately tower at the East Port. Though Dundee in olden days had many gates, as note the names of the thoroughfares now—as Cowgate, Murraygate, Nethergate, etc., this one at the East Port alone remains. It is many years since the bloody Claver's led in his Highlanders and harried the town, "Bonnie Dundee," as the handsome soldier was called, riding himself up the West Port, to the skirling of the bagpipes. The East Port or gateway is the only part of the wall that formerly surrounded



STORAGE OF CASES.



THE OLD STEEPLE, DUNDEE.

Dundee that now remains. The West Port has long been demolished, although the name still lingers in the street of the same name.

I am inclined to think that the East Port is not the original East Port of Dundee. The main road to the east of Dundee was formerly the Seagate, and it is still that. The Cowgate and the Well-

gate are merely branches of the Murray-gate; and it is across the Cowgate that the present East Port stands. The name shows that it was not an important roadway, but merely a convenience, or rather a short cut for the townspeople getting their cows to the fields.

It is generally conceded that it is a sort of poetic licence describing the present East Port as the gateway from which Wishart preached. The graves of those that died of the plague were nearer the



THE STATUE OF BURNS.



THE ROYAL ARCH, DUNDEE

river than they would have been if the gate had been the present East Port. Yet this gate, known now as Wishart's Gate, still remains, and is still revered. It was restored some fifteen years ago, and a plate fixed on the outer side bearing the following inscription:—"During the plague of 1544 George Wishart preached from the parapet of this Port, the people standing within the gate, and the plague-stricken lying without in booths.—'He sent His word and healed them.'—Ps. cvii."

At the harbour stands what is

known as the Royal Arch. It was built to commemorate the landing of the Queen at Dundee in 1844. As will be seen from the illustration, it is Norman-Gothic in style. The picture of the frozen fountain was taken during the severe frost two winters ago, and shows the extreme cold that must have then existed. Burns, as the national poet of Scotland, is statued everywhere: a very handsome one exists in the town of Dundee. Among the many objects of more than ordinary interest around Dundee, I may mention the old Castle of Mains. This old castle is supposed to have been erected by one of the Grahams of Fintry in 1562, and Viscount Dundee also lived there.

Arbroath is famous for its old abbey, now in picturesque ruins, and for the Bell Rock, better known to us all as the Inchcape Rock, and also for some very fine rock scenery.

Arbroath is the ancient Aberbrothock, and dates back to the seventh century. It was here King William erected the abbey in honour of Thomas à Becket. From what remains, one can form some idea of the grandeur and massiveness of



FOUNTAIN FROZEN IN WINTER OF 1892.



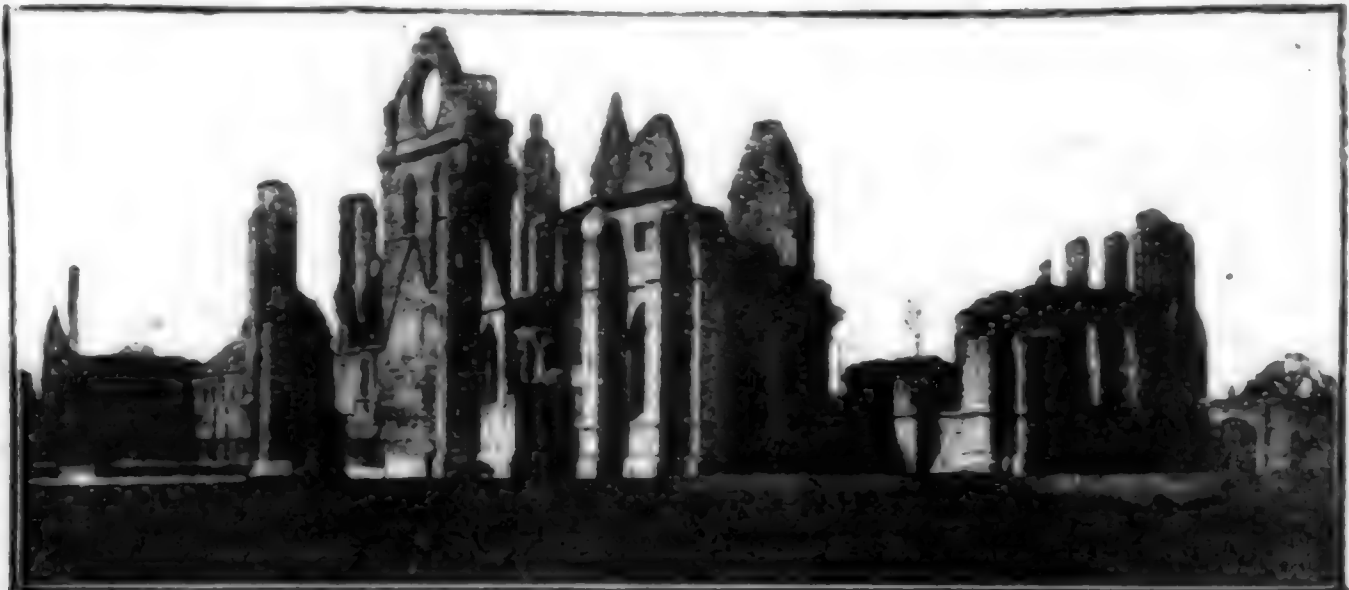
WISHART ARCH, DUNDEE.

this church when it was in the height of its power. The ruins, which have braved the stormy blasts of centuries, still stand bold and defiant, showing us how strongly and solidly they have been built.

A few miles out stands the Bell Rock, now having a lighthouse erected on it to warn all mariners of its dangerous surroundings. In olden days a bell clanged forth as it was tossed to and fro:

On a buoy, in the storm, it floated and
swung,
And over the waves its warning rung;

and we are told how all people
hearing the bell were wont to



ARBROATH ABBEY.

blest the Abbot of Aberbrothock,
till one fine day a certain Ralph
the Rover coolly cut the warning
bell from its moorings, chuckling
to himself the while that the next
comer would not bless the worthy
abbot. Time passed on ; Ralph,
having amassed a fortune by free-
booting, is returning home to Scot-
land, and encounters a storm on
this very coast ; and the ship
drifts along, tossing about

Till the vessel strikes with a shivering
shock.

Oh, Fate ! it is the Inchcape Rock.

In vain Sir Ralph cursed and
swore. Down he went, wrecked
on that very rock, and it is need-
less to add *he* did not bless the
Abbot of Aberbrothock,

But ever in his dying fear
One dreadful sound could the Rover hear ;
A sound as if with the Inchcape bell
The fiends below were ringing his knell.



MAINS CASTLE, NEAR DUNDEE.



THE INCHCAPE ROCK

Some People we have Met this Month.



THE LADY WHO HAS A HUSBAND SOMEWHERE IN INDIA.



THE MAN WHO KNOWS WHERE TO GET THE BEST OF EVERYTHING.



"ALL A BLOWIN' AND A GROWIN'."

Revelations of a London Pawnbroker.

No. 6 — *Lady Valentine's Necklace.*

By PAUL SETON.

A VERY readable book might doubtless be written upon the bad habit of doing those things we ought not to do, and the equally reprehensible and kindred practice of leaving undischarged our duty in other matters claiming our attention. I have, however, no intention of writing such a work myself, but I have much pleasure in presenting the suggestion gratis to any "literary gent" hard up for "copy." At the same time I am bound in common fairness to remark that nearly every evil has its redeeming feature—the reader is earnestly requested to understand that no professional pun is involved in this observation—and that had it not been for a little of both of these blamable customs rolled into one, this tale would never, in all probability, have seen the light. As it is, there can be no question that had the dictates of prudence been only more strictly adhered to, Lady Valentine would never—but stop, this is not right! No storyteller, in my opinion, has the slightest justification for beginning with the end of his tale, although Mr. — but this might be considered libellous, so, perhaps I had better not go on.

The Earl of St. Martins was a gouty old nobleman—not a gentleman, mark you! no one in his wildest moments ever accused the earl of being that—whose chief characteristics were complete baldness, intense affection for old port, and a most amazing command of powerful language. One of his principal diversions was to sit up all night in his library, in company with a goodly supply of his favourite wine, under the shallow pretext of reading Homer. Then, as the day broke, he would summon Simmonds, his confidential valet, and retire to bed, and if his reflections on the great Greek poet

had not been of a particularly pleasant nature during the midnight hours, his temper would be, as the faithful Simmonds was wont to describe it, "truly horful," and his talk, if anything, a trifle worse. With this cheerful person resided Lady Valentine, his widowed daughter-in-law, a fair, pale, delicate woman of four-and-twenty, or thereabouts; the Hon. John Ashley, his nephew and heir-presumptive, a distinguished young man about town; Lady Valentine's five-year-old daughter, Ethel; her French governess, Mademoiselle Lemaire, a superior, highly accomplished Parisienne of the most attractive order, and the usual crowd of menials, headed by the redoubtable Simmonds.

My first introduction to this affable nobleman came about in this wise: a certain cadaverous-looking young man one day attempted to pledge at my establishment a silver salver bearing the crest of the St. Martins family—three melancholy martins, supported by a fiery sun in the centre of an open book, and the motto, *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. As his replies to questions asked regarding its ownership were eminently unsatisfactory, the piece of plate was detained, and it ultimately devolved upon me to restore it in person to its rightful proprietor, the earl, at his town residence in Berkeley Square. His language on that occasion was marked by the same profundity of strength which I afterwards discovered to be habitual, but which, being unaccustomed to it at the time, astonished me not a little. He commenced by declaring his unalterable conviction that all pawnbrokers were born thieves, and even declined, in the most positive manner, to make the slightest exception in favour of myself. All this, accompanied, as it was, by a rapid succession of potential adjectives, was very dis-

couraging, especially considering, as I endeavoured to point out, that had it not been for the prompt and efficient action of one of these born thieves, the balance of probabilities decidedly pointed to his never setting eyes on his silver salver again. But no, he would have none of it, and I was about taking my departure in disgust when an opportune and intelligent contraction of the Hon. John's left eyelid induced me to alter my determination. After a while the turgid stream of diction manifested signs of declining power, and finally ceased altogether for a moment through sheer exhaustion. The Hon. John promptly took advantage of the intermission to hastily throw oil upon the raging waters, and his efforts were so far rewarded that the earl somewhat relaxed in ferocity, and even went to the extent of condescendingly admitting the possibility of one white sheep existing among so many black. By dint of perseverance I managed to follow up this slight victory, with such success that at length his lordship entirely abandoned his hostile attitude, ordered in a bottle of his crustiest port, and invited me to a private inspection of the various works of art with which the mansion was crammed. So ended peacefully my first stormy meeting with the Earl of St. Martins.

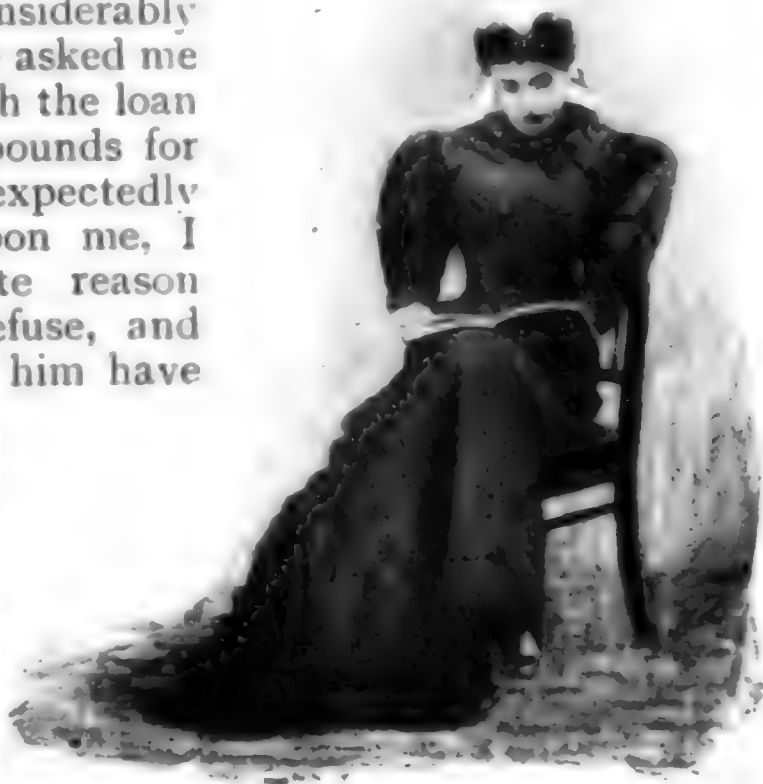
After this the Hon. John would drop in occasionally at my shop, interchange a few commonplaces on the various topics of the day, purchase perchance a small article of jewellery, and then saunter off lazily in the direction of his club. There came, however, a day when he made a request which considerably surprised me. He asked me to oblige him with the loan of five hundred pounds for a fortnight. Unexpectedly as this came upon me, I saw no adequate reason why I should refuse, and accordingly I let him have the money. At the expiration of the agreed term it was punctually returned. Three weeks afterwards I was confronted with an extended request for one thousand pounds

for one month. This I also advanced, and it was likewise duly repaid; and, in short, this sort of thing went on and on until I had lent the Hon. John no less than five thousand pounds on his simple note of hand alone. Then I began to think.

I cannot say I derived much satisfaction from my thoughts. It was true the Hon. John was the heir-presumptive to the earldom of St. Martins, but the old earl was still comparatively young and vigorous, and, if his devotion to Homer did not increase beyond all reasonable bounds, might live for many a year to come. Besides, I was primarily a pawnbroker—one who advanced money against good collateral security—and this kind of business was scarcely within the legitimate scope of my trade. And then I remembered, with some misgiving, a curious little story I had once read, of how a certain individual went down to a fashionable seaside town, put up at the most expensive hotel, and advertised far and near how all persons sending him sixpence in postage stamps would hear of something greatly to their advantage; how the few speculative souls who replied were gladdened by receiving back by return of post their original stamps with six others added unto them; how, when the advertisement appeared next day to the same effect, only substituting twelve stamps for six, quite a small multitude responded, and had their confidence promptly rewarded by the reception of

twenty-four stamps for their twelve; and how this entertaining pastime went on increasing in popularity day by day until at length the amount to be sent reached a sovereign—when, lo! this benefactor of his species, hitherto fondly imagined by a trustful public to be a benevolent old lunatic harmlessly amusing himself by thus disposing of his superfluous wealth, suddenly vanished into space amid universal weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, and was never heard of more.

Of course, I knew there was no precise analogy between my case and this



HIS WIDOWED DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

little tale; but still the principle was the same. The Hon. John was increasing his amounts in exactly the same way the marine fakir did his, and I decided I would send in no more stamps; in other words, that I would in future discontinue the supply unless I received the customary security. I had not long to wait for an opportunity to carry my resolution into effect. It seemed to stagger the Hon. John somewhat at first, but he speedily resumed his usual nonchalant smile, and went away, promising to return the following day with the necessary deposit. It was upwards of a week, however, before he made his re-appearance, and then it struck me his manner was scarcely so coolly indifferent and self-possessed as was his general wont.

"I have not been over well," he explained, "or I should have been here before. I presume you will not have any difficulty in letting me have ten thousand pounds upon this?"

And he opened a morocco case, and displayed to my gaze one of the most magnificent necklaces I have ever seen during the whole course of a not inconsiderable experience. It was composed of three rows of superb gems: the first, lustrous old Oriental pearls; the second, matchlessly pure Brazilian diamonds; and the third, rare pigeon-blooded rubies that would have rejoiced the heart of a king. It was indeed so perfect as to be almost priceless, and I stood examining it for some minutes in silent astonishment and delight. At last I spoke.

"This is, I have no hesitation in saying, one of the very finest necklaces I have ever had submitted to me for inspection, and I shall have much pleasure in advancing the sum you mention upon it; but you will excuse me—er—" (I felt I was getting on delicate ground now)—"may I ask if —"

"If it belongs to me, you would say," he interrupted, with a little laugh. "Well,

frankly, no—it doesn't. It is the property of Lady Valentine."

"Of Lady Valentine?" I said, mechanically.

"Of Lady Valentine," he repeated, quietly. "You will perceive I am perfectly open with you. Lady Valentine has been good enough to lend it to me for this purpose."

It at once occurred to me that this was a rather remarkable circumstance; but I made no remark, and he continued without embarrassment:

"I anticipated you might possibly require some confirmation of my word—though among gentlemen it should be quite unnecessary—and I therefore asked Lady Valentine to write a few lines in corroboration of what I have just said. Here they are."

And with a curiously composite gesture, in which hauteur and frankness seemed striving for mastery, he flung an open letter on the table before me.

"Yes; but you see," I hastened to observe, "that, unfortunately, doesn't help one very much in the matter. Nothing, I assure you, is farther from my mind than doubting your assertion, but you must be aware I have not the honour of Lady Valentine's acquaintance, and in a transaction of this magnitude common pru-

dence suggests the attendance of the actual principal."

"That is impossible," he replied, reddening.

"Then I really don't see how the matter is to be arranged," I remarked reflectively; "unless, indeed, Lady Valentine would permit me to call upon her in Berkeley Square."

"Oh, utterly out of the question," he exclaimed, with the first approach to anything like excitement he had displayed during the interview. "Lady Valentine is—ah—somewhat—that is, seriously—indisposed, and cannot receive visitors on any account. No, it is not to be thought



THE MARINE FAKIR.

of for a moment. You will have to dispense with her ladyship altogether."

"That is equally not to be thought of for a moment," I answered, with much positiveness. "I must certainly see her ladyship, or I cannot complete the loan."

The determination in my tone must have convinced him, for he made no response to this, but knit his brows thoughtfully and appeared to be revolving the best way out of the difficulty.

"What a pity you don't know Lady Valentine personally. But, at any rate, you are familiar with her portrait?"

"Never saw either one or the other in my life," I returned shortly, for this seemed to me beside the question.

"Ah!" he exclaimed quickly, "is that so? Really, you surprise me. Well, as the matter presses, I suppose I must employ my persuasive powers and endeavour to bring her ladyship round this afternoon—that is, of course, if her health will permit of such a thing," he added suddenly, after a slight pause.

"That will certainly be the most satisfactory arrangement for all parties," I replied. And with this understanding, he departed.

In the afternoon he returned, accompanied by a tall, elegant woman, closely wrapped in rich furs, and I was formally introduced to Lady Valentine. Her ladyship was affability itself, and her illness certainly did not appear to have been of such a very serious nature after all. The necessary formalities were soon completed and the pair drove away together, Lady Valentine the poorer by her splendid necklace and the Hon. John richer by ten thousand pounds.

During the next few months the necklace was frequently redeemed and re-deposited: in fact, its incomings and outgoings became so common as to excite no attention after a while. There was nothing extraordinary in this. The London season was in full swing, and Lady Valentine would doubtless be constantly requiring the services of so important a piece of jewellery in attending the gayer functions of Society. My mind became occupied by other and fresher circumstances, and I ceased to regard the occurrence as in any way exceptional. About this time I was engaged in transacting a heavy business with a well-known dealer in Works of Art, and in particular I advanced largely to him on several important paintings,

chiefly by ancient masters. I was by no means ignorant of the difficulties he was in, and I was therefore not surprised to receive one morning a blue official notice with the ominous heading: "*Re* James Emerson Fairfax." But I was considerably more than surprised; I was both alarmed and dismayed on opening the case containing one of the principal pictures—a Rubens, on which I had lent a thousand pounds—to discover it held nothing but a copy of the genuine work, scarce worth as many shillings as I had loaned sovereigns.

This appalling revelation naturally caused me the greatest anxiety, and I hastened to interview the defaulting man of art, but he had disappeared, and his whereabouts could not be ascertained. I returned home in a far from amiable frame of mind, to find a letter awaiting me from Inspector Bennett, containing an invitation to visit him at Scotland Yard as soon as convenience permitted. I was in no humour for further business that day, and I accordingly determined to call on him at once. He received me with his customary friendliness, and after the usual greetings, proceeded to enlighten me upon the object of his communication, which, having no relation to the present narrative, I purposely omit. I took advantage of the occasion, however, to inform him of the delinquencies of Mr. James Emerson Fairfax, with reference to the atrocious fraud I had so recently discovered. He listened with sympathetic attention, and when I had concluded, bade me console myself with the reflection that after all, it might have been worse.

"I suppose the artful beggar really did leave you the original picture the first time," he observed—I had already told him there had been five or six distinct pledgings—"and on the last occasion, you took everything as a matter of course, and merely gave a cursory glance at the painting."

I mournfully intimated that such was the case.

"Ah, well," he continued, "you're not likely to be done that way again, and this may be a cheap lesson to you in the end. Suppose, now, it had been jewels—diamonds, or rubies, or pearls, for instance; it might have cost you ten times as much. I hear there's some wonderfully fine stuff of that sort knocking about town just at present."

Somehow my heart gave a great leap into my mouth at these words, and my thoughts instantly reverted to Lady Valentine's necklace. Good God! suppose anything should be wrong with that! I could scarcely conceal my perturbation at this frightful possibility, and bidding a hasty adieu to Bennett, I tore home like one possessed, and barely waited to get inside the door before ordering the necklace to be brought instantly from the strong-room, that I might satisfy myself on this painfully momentous point. One look was quite sufficient, and I sank back in my chair with a deathly faintness at my heart. My worst fears were realised. The stones were spurious: the necklace had been changed.

When I had somewhat recovered from the stupor following this shock, I hastened back with all speed to Scotland Yard, only to find that Bennett had left for the day, and was not expected until the following noon. In my misery I determined to go on to Battenbury, who in conjunction with myself, had the pick of the West-end trade, and who, being a personal friend, might be able to pour balm into my gaping wound, and, at the same time, suggest the best course to be pursued under the circumstances. I noticed his face gradually pale as he listened to my tale of woe, but this I naturally set down to his intense fellow feeling for a brother Lombardian in sore distress. My astonishment, then, was not small when at the conclusion of my recital, he rushed hastily from the room, and returning with a red morocco case in his hands, placed it before my fascinated eyes, pressed the spring, and, in a voice trembling with emotion, bade me look. I complied like one in a dream. Wonder of wonders! before me, softly reposing in its nest of sapphire velvet, lay Lady Valentine's necklace, with its three strings of priceless stones, a glittering mass of brilliant, flashing colour that dazzled as it charmed.

The sight of the jewels not only had a wonderfully reviving effect upon my drooping spirits; it acted as a tonic to my unstrung nerves, and restored me in no small degree to my normal cool and cautious condition. I was evidently face to face with a combination of events of more than usual significance, and I saw at once I should require all the prudence engendered by long experience to con-

duct them to a satisfactory issue. I turned to Battenbury, and enquired, with a calmness which astonished myself, if the necklace had been in his possession for any length of time.

"Only since yesterday morning," he replied, gazing with mournful abstraction at the case; "it was brought to me"—here he lowered his voice—"by Signora Gerbalda, the famous Italian actress and danseuse. I lent her eight thousand on t. Looks queer, doesn't it?"

It did, indeed. Signora Gerbalda was a well-known public performer, in receipt of a fabulous salary, who, it was freely hinted, took a far less severe view of life than was considered desirable or proper by her English sisters. She numbered with pride two dukes among her devoutest admirers, while, as for common lords and sirs, well, their name was simply legion. Battenbury was quite right. It did look queer, and no mistake. There was certainly a case here for Bennett after his own heart.

It may well be imagined I passed a sleepless night. It was true I was not a poor man, but I certainly was not prepared to view the ultimate loss of ten thousand pounds with anything like equanimity, and long before noon I was pacing impatiently up and down at the "Yard," awaiting the tardy arrival of Bennett with feverish anxiety. I pounced upon him like a hawk the moment he made his appearance, and lost no time in telling him all about my important "find" of the previous evening. He shook his head when I asked him his opinion, and offered me a cigar instead.

"Well, but what *do* you make of it?" I exclaimed at length, almost angrily, as he sat there smoking steadily, without manifesting the slightest inclination to utter a single word.

He stared calmly at me for a minute before replying, and then knocking, with great deliberation, the ash off his cigar, said:

"Yes, certainly. Curious case; very curious case. Been to Berkeley Square at all?"

"No," I answered promptly, "I have not. I thought it best to do nothing until I had first consulted you."

"Quite right and very proper," commented Bennett, with a most exasperating grin. "Never do things in a hurry. Always have to repent of them afterwards. What sort of a person is this Lady Valentine?"

"She was really so enveloped in furs when she came to my place that I can hardly tell you. She gave me the impression, however, of being an accomplished, handsome, affable woman."

"Exactly. And you only saw her on that one occasion?"

"That is all."

"And the Hon. John. When did you see him last?"

"A week ago last Tuesday."

"Ah! just so. The date of the final pledging, in fact?"

"Precisely."

"And what was his demeanour like then?"

"Oh! much the same as usual, only he seemed to be in an awful hurry to get away—and small wonder," I added bitterly.

"Signora Gerbalda—she told your friend Battenbury nothing?"

"Not a word, except that the necklace was a present to her from a nobleman. You see," I went on, "she is an old client of Battenbury's, and an uncommonly good one too, and, of course, he didn't like to put any questions that might seem awkward."

"Naturally. Well, we must look into this a bit. If you'll call round again at five I'll turn it over in my mind meanwhile, and we'll see what's best to be done."

It may be very confidently assumed I was exceedingly punctual in attending to this appointment, and the first stroke of five had barely died away ere I was standing in Bennett's sanctum once more, where I found that indefatigable officer scribbling away for dear life—of course with the everlasting cigar sticking from his mouth. He nodded to me pleasantly, and went on furiously with his work; and for twenty minutes by the clock I had to endure the exquisite torture of beholding him busily engaged on other matters beside my own. He finished at last, however, and, after an extended stretch, assisted himself to a fresh cigar, turned his chair round so as to face me, and plunged bodily into the subject that was to me the supreme question of the hour.

"As I have before remarked, Mr. Stephens," he began cheerfully, "this is a curious case—a very curious case, look at it how you will. Now, may I enquire if you have any suggestion of your own to offer in reference to it?"



THE HONOURABLE JOHN.

"None," I replied savagely, "except that it seems to me this Hon. John Ashley is a swindler of the first magnitude, and, as such, should receive the undivided attention of those who are supposed to represent the law."

"Good," said Mr. Bennett, approvingly, "very good indeed. We will now proceed a little further, with your permission, and consider why the Hon. John Ashley is a swindler of the first magnitude."

"Great heavens!" I exclaimed, completely losing all patience at what I considered this unworthy trifling, "what in the world does it matter to me *why* he is a scoundrel? I only know he is one, and what I want is to get my money back as soon as I can, if possible, and see him brought to justice to boot."

"Two very spirited and laudable desires," returned the perfectly unmoved Bennett, "especially if, to begin with, you are right in your conclusions."

"What other conclusions, in the name of common sense, would you have me come to, then?" I enquired, sarcastically. "Perhaps you think that, after all, the Hon. John didn't pledge the necklace; or,

may be, you imagine it hasn't even been changed. I can hardly believe you go the length of regarding the whole affair as a figment of my disordered imagination."

Bennett chuckled softly to himself as if the whole affair was, at any rate, a very capital joke. I failed myself to see any cause for merriment, and I expressed a strong opinion to that effect. Bennett promptly apologised for his levity, with a wicked glint of laughter still beaming in his eye, and then proceeded to startle me by saying,

"You haven't a single tittle of evidence to show the Hon. John is a swindler and scoundrel of the first or any other magnitude whatever. The man may have acted in perfect good faith throughout, and, for aught you can prove to the contrary, may be as innocent as that dear little proverbial unborn babe."

"Of course he may," I retorted, feeling very mad at such a ridiculous assumption; "but then, you see, if he is, why does he go about substituting worthless paste for valuable stones, and obtaining thousands of pounds on things worth only hundreds of pence? Perhaps you'll kindly reconcile these two rather glaring inconsistencies."

And it was I who chuckled this time, for I rather fancied I had Bennett in a tight place. Alas! for my folly in measuring myself against one universally acknowledged to be the subtlest detective of his day!

My companion blew out a tremendous cloud of smoke, through which I could still see his eyes twinkling humorously as he calmly replied,

"It's never quite safe to conclude guilt from appearances only. Of course they are valuable, very valuable, so far as they go, but they should always be taken in conjunction with other considerations, say, for instance, motive and probability. Now, tell me frankly, can you assign any sufficient motive for the Hon. John Ashley, heir-presumptive to the Earldom of St. Martins, acting in this insane fashion?"

Candidly, I couldn't; but I felt particularly indisposed to admit this; so I pumped out some well-worn aphorisms about the love of money, poverty and crime, necessity and lawlessness, and so forth, at which Bennett merely chuckled again internally and enquired how about probability.

"Oh, as for probability," I replied, with

diminishing confidence, "of course he was hard up, and so—well, you see, of course it *was* probable."

This brilliant piece of argument on my part met with exactly the fate it deserved, Bennett observing with fine irony that it was altogether useless attempting to controvert the eternal verities.

"But you will pardon me for pointing out," he continued, "that the Hon. John Ashley was not really hard up at all, in the strict sense of the term. Do you happen to know his credit was and is so good that he could raise fifty thousand pounds to-morrow if he chose?"

I expressed my astonishment suitably, and then not unnaturally enquired what solution of the difficulty Bennett himself had to offer.

"Like yourself, none at present," was the short reply. "But we are wasting time; come, my cab has been at the door over an hour."

"And where do you want to go to?" I said, rising.

"To Berkeley Square, to be sure, where I hope to have the pleasure of interviewing a scoundrel and swindler of the very first magnitude."

No answer was possible to an observation of this sort, so we descended the stairs in silence, and rattled off sharply to the mansion of the Earl of St. Martins.

The Hon. John Ashley received us in the library with every mark of courteous surprise, and politely requested our business with him. Bennett took upon himself the unpleasant task of explanation, and as he proceeded with his odious obligation the face of the principal personage slowly crimsoned until the colour became as deep as that of the blood-red rose he wore in the buttonhole of his dress coat. When Bennett had concluded, a dead silence fell upon us all for some moments, and then the Hon. John slowly advanced to the table where we were standing, and in a voice of mingled dignity and sorrow said:

"I am grieved beyond measure that anyone should for one second deem me capable of such disgraceful conduct. Foolish and ill-advised I may and doubtless have been, but no spot of dishonour has ever yet rested upon my reputation as a gentleman. In the sight of Heaven I solemnly declare to you I am entirely innocent in this matter."

Even as he spoke, the door gently opened

and a pale, fair, delicate woman entered the room.

"Excuse me, John," she said, with a start of surprise on seeing strangers; "I did not know you were engaged. The dinner bell has rung the second time."

And as she quietly withdrew, Bennett said quickly to the Hon. John, whose face was now as white as it had previously been crimson,

"Who is that?"

And all the old bitterness against the man whom I believed had wickedly defrauded me of ten thousand pounds returned upon me with redoubled sharpness as I heard the Hon. John, with his left hand pressed upon his heart, murmur faintly,

"That is Lady Valentine."

Bennett turned to me instantly, and our eyes met.

He shook his head as he read the look in mine, and then suddenly uttering a cry of alarm he rushed forward.

The Hon. John had swooned.

Aid was speedily forthcoming, and, as soon as we decently could, Bennett and I took the only available course open to us, and unobtrusively withdrew.

"Well," I said to my companion eagerly, as soon as we were outside the house, "what do you think of your *protégé* now, pray? On his own showing he is a liar, and I strongly suspect an audacious thief in addition."

I spoke as I felt, bitterly. Bennett was plainly vexed, and showed it.

"If I were you, Mr. Stephens," he answered, with a perceptible touch of impatience in his voice, "I'd just wait and see the end of the piece before passing final judgment. I've known many clever men ere now led clean away from the right track by allowing impulse and feeling to take the place of reason. There's some mystery behind all this which I don't precisely fathom at present, but you may believe me I'm going to try, and I don't exactly fancy I shall fail, either."

"And in the meantime how about my ten thousand pounds?" I said grimly.



"THAT IS LADY VALENTINE."

"That's of no consequence whatever, I suppose?"

Bennett smiled a little smile, and the frown sailed off his brow.

"We'll see what to-morrow may bring forth," he replied, "and, at any rate, we'll do no harm in hoping for the best. Of course we shall have to call at Berkeley Square. How will twelve o'clock suit you?"

It suited me very well, and the next day at noon found us once more face to face with the Hon. John. He was very pale and evidently suffering acutely, but perfectly calm and self-possessed, and obviously determined to say nothing more than he was obliged. We knew almost, if not quite, as much about the affair as he did, he declared. The necklace was really the property of Lady Valentine, and had been

lent to him for the purpose he stated at the time. It was also true that at that particular period her ladyship was far from well, and altogether unfit to be troubled with matters of business. He had, he admitted with regret, persuaded another lady to take her place, but nothing more. He was entirely unaware until the previous evening of any changing of the jewels, and he could offer no explanation whatever of this extraordinary circumstance. He had no desire that I should be an innocent sufferer in any way—quite the reverse; and it should be his especial care to see the amount I had advanced was duly refunded. That was all he had to tell us, and, as the doctor had ordered him complete rest as far as possible, would we kindly excuse him bidding us good morning. And so we were politely bowed out—as wise as when we entered.

"H'm! cheerful, certainly," grumbled Bennett discontentedly, as we walked towards Whitehall. "I'm afraid my *protégé*, as you are pleased to call him, is scarcely coming up to the high expectations I had formed of him. I believe he has told us the truth, but not all the truth: there's something he's keeping back. Well, we

must try our hand with the Signora now, and pray devoutly for better luck."

But the Signora simply flouted us. The necklace was a present, certainly. Why not? She had many presents. Ah! ever so many. They were always coming. Eh! the name? Ah, no! Impossible. It would not be right. Think what scandal! With pleasure anything else, but the name!—ah, no!

Nor did our attempt to solve the riddle through Lady Valentine meet with any greater success. Her ladyship was too indisposed to receive anyone, we were informed on calling, but perhaps Mademoiselle Lemaire would do as well. Would we care to see her? Most decidedly. And accordingly we did. Directly she entered the room I gave a great start of surprise. It was the Lady Valentine of my acquaintance—an unexpected discovery, to be sure, but the only one of importance we made during the interview. We were completely nonplussed.

A week elapsed, and then one fine morning Bennett suddenly stalked into my office, and coolly announced that he thought he had a clue. He was smoking a very big cigar, so I not unreasonably concluded he had at last really got hold of something which seemed likely to lead to a solution of this remarkable puzzle.

"It must be something good," I observed with a mischievous smile, as I prepared to accompany him, "if the size of the cigar is any criterion."

"Come and see," was the curt rejoinder, and once again we turned our faces in the direction of Berkeley Square, but this time our business was with the master of the mansion—the Earl of St. Martins himself.

His lordship, who was in the library, presumably deeply immersed, as usual, in his Homeric studies, received us with, for him, astonishing cordiality. He conversed about the weather, the crops, imperial parliament, and the like, with an affability and condescension truly amazing in one of his well-known disposition. We listened in comparative silence while the stream of words flowed

steadily on, until Bennett, watching his opportunity, brought it to an abrupt stop by producing a curious little gold card-case, which immediately attracted the attention of the earl.

"I believe, my lord," said Bennett quietly, holding it up between his finger and thumb, "this is an article which your lordship was unlucky enough to lose the other day."

His lordship's bald head glistened like burnished gold in the glowing sunshine as he hastily replied in the affirmative. Bennett handed it to him without a word, and then came the question for which he had been waiting.

"I am very glad to get it back again; where, may I ask, did you find it?"

The answer was all ready, and came as pat as possible.

"I fancy, your lordship must have dropped it as you left Signora Gerbalda's house the other evening."

For a moment or two his lordship appeared slightly disconcerted, but it was only temporary.

"Ah, yes," he exclaimed, "of course—most likely, most likely. I—er—er—fine woman the Signora, eh? ah! uncommonly fine woman, I think."

And there was the bald-headed old sinner actually chuckling and choking and rubbing his hands together in high glee! It was horrible.

"Yes," replied Bennett carelessly, "she certainly is, as your lordship says, an uncommonly fine woman. And she's got some uncommonly fine jewellery too, I'm told—a diamond, ruby and pearl necklace in particular, worth no end of money I understand."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared his lordship. "Capital! capital! splendid! oh, most excellent joke! But I say, you know, suppose it should turn out to be only imitation after all, wouldn't that be a joke, eh? Ha! ha! ha!"

"Oh, that's perfectly ridiculous nonsense," cried Bennett very rudely. "Why, she's pawned it for eight thousand pounds."

"Eight thousand pounds



"MUST HAVE DROPPED IT"

you fool!" thundered the old earl, white with rage at being treated with such contumely, "why, you confounded idiot, the necklace is only paste. *I gave it to her myself!*"

It was quite true. The necklace had been the earl's wedding gift to his daughter-in-law. Struck by its great beauty, he had subsequently caused an imitation one to be made, which he kept in the great safe in the library, which was the common receptacle for all the valuable jewellery of the household. As the two cases were precisely similar in appearance, it was not difficult to understand now how easily one might be mistaken in the hurry of the moment for the other. The Hon. John came off with flying colours after all, much to the gratification of Bennett.

Lady Valentine, it appeared, was afflicted with a prodigal brother, whose life was alternately spent in getting into scrapes and getting out of them again. It was for this promising young rascal that the money was constantly being required, and it was his follies primarily that caused all the succeeding trouble. The old earl was so mortified at the whole affair that he shortly afterwards had a fit and died, lamented by few and regretted by none. The Hon. John thus became the fifth earl, and soon after Lady Valentine again changed her estate and became the Countess of St. Martins. And I may say in conclusion that the whole story has always struck me as being so peculiar as to well deserve a place among the REVELATIONS OF A LONDON PAWNBROKER.



Whispers from the Woman's World.

By FLORENCE MARY GARDINER.

HISTORIC HOUSES.—HAWARDEN CASTLE.

The Home of Mrs. Gladstone.

HAWARDEN CASTLE is situated about six miles from Chester, and is in the County of Flint. The present building, which was erected in 1752, is a complete contrast to the old castle, clustered with ivy, and with solid walls, reared six hundred years ago, when dwellings were strongly fashioned to withstand the lawless hands of the invader. All that now remains of the latter is the picturesque old keep, from which a fine view of the surrounding country is to be obtained. The present castle, with its turreted battlements, large and luxuriously-furnished rooms, looking on to charming flower-beds, grassy lawns and sylvan glades, beautifully wooded, forms an ideal country residence, and one which must possess the greatest attraction for Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, who are compelled, from their social posi-

tion and political aims, to spend much of their time among the busy haunts of men, and away from what is essentially their home and the centre of their domestic interests.

Mrs. Gladstone is the daughter of Sir Stephen R. Glynne, Bart., and the only survivor of his four children; consequently the Lordship of the Manor, Hawarden Castle and the adjoining estate devolved upon the present owner,—the popular wife of the Premier.

Originally a square brick house, it has been added to from time to time, and was in 1809 encased in stone obtained from Tinkersdale Quarry. Perhaps the most interesting feature in the castle is the great statesman's study, or the "Temple of Peace," as it is generally called. This is built around with books, for not only are the walls well lined, but projecting cases stand out at right angles, each wide enough to hold a double row of volumes. There



From a Photo. b.]

HAWARDEN CASTLE, THE RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. GLADSTONE.

[Valentine, Dundee.



MRS. GLADSTONE.

are over 20,000, on divers subjects, though theology claims a large proportion. Homer, Dante and Shakespeare have their appointed places; and any resident visitor is permitted to borrow books at pleasure, providing his or her name is entered in a catalogue kept for the purpose. With such a collection, of course, a great many have overflowed into the other rooms of the house, and in the drawing-room and ante-drawing-room there are numberless cases filled with tomes containing the results of the researches of many generations. Adjoining Mr. Gladstone's study is the library—a well-proportioned and comfortable room,

containing family portraits and other pictures; notably a fine painting by Millais of Mr. Gladstone and his grandson, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Gladstone, and also some good specimens of the work of Sir Peter Lely, Snyders and Vandyck.

The drawing-room is a charming apartment in the south-west portion of the castle. From the windows may be seen the ancient keep, as it towers on an eminence above the surrounding trees. The park is about two hundred and fifty acres in extent, and through its midst runs a ravine, passing immediately under the old castle. Two waterfalls occur in the course of the

Broughton Brook, which flows through the park, and greatly add to the beauty of the landscape.

Near to the present castle is Mrs. Gladstone's Orphanage, for the accommodation

during the cholera scourge in London, Mrs. Gladstone organised a nursing staff to combat the epidemic, and herself visited the wards daily. She was mainly instrumental in founding a temporary Convales-



[Thornton, Luton.]

THE DRAWING ROOM, HAWARDEN CASTLE.

From a Photo. by]

of thirty boys, and another labour of love—a Home of Rest for aged and infirm women.

It would be impossible to do justice to the many works of charity of this most beloved and benevolent woman. In 1866,

cent Home for the patients, and this was afterwards permanently established in the neighbourhood of Woodford, on the borders of Epping Forest. Here convalescents are received without payment, though preference is given to the unfortunate

denizens of the East End of London.

The Newport Market School Refuge and the House of Charity, Soho, owe their existence to her exertions, and when the terrible cotton famine was ravaging Lancashire, in her kindness of heart, Mrs. Gladstone visited the district, and materially assisted in alleviating the distress by conveying many of the men to Hawarden, and by employing them in road making and in various other ways.

Mrs. Gladstone does not profess to be an orator; but when called upon to speak in public, her remarks are always distinguished by straightforwardness and sound common sense; and she has, on more than one occasion, contributed to the periodical literature of the day. It is, however, in the relations of wife and mother that Mrs. Gladstone particularly shines, and one has only to see her in the midst of her family circle to realise how highly she is appreciated by her husband and children, and how truly it may be said of her, as of that

faithful woman of old: that her price is "Far above rubies."

THE HOME.

Let us have a chat together, dear reader, about one of the most important parts of the "House Beautiful"—the Nursery or "Children's Kingdom," as fond mothers delight to style it.

Those who rule with omnipotent sway this portion of the domestic realm have grave responsibilities placed upon them; for it is no light matter to mould youthful minds, or to train young bodies, so that in the years to come, mental and physical deformities shall be the exception, rather than the rule; and that future generations shall live to bless us for the denials and efforts we have made on their behalf.

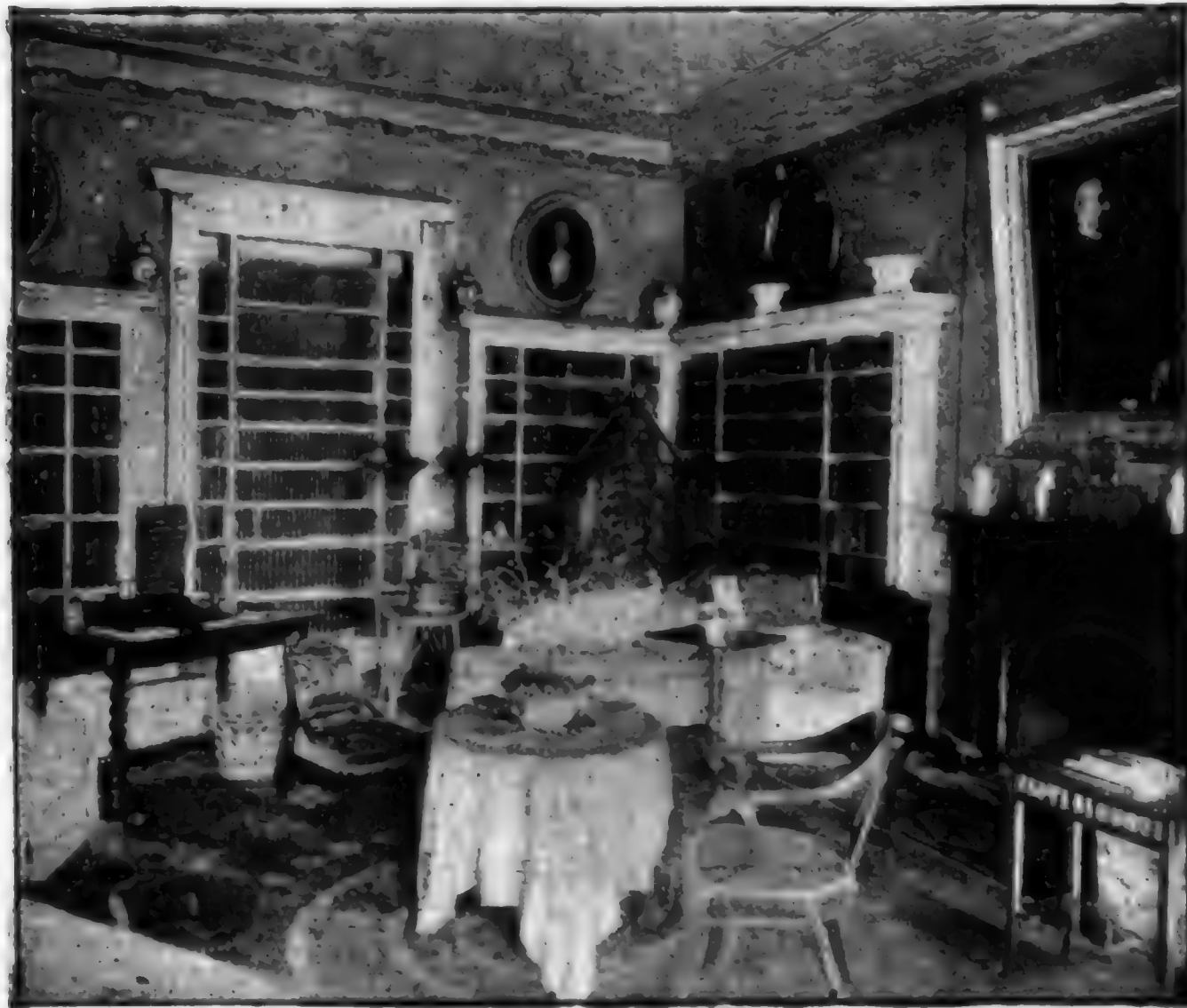
It is apparent to the most casual observer that in this age of bustle, hurry and turmoil, many are inclined to depute to others



From a Photo. by]

THE OLD CASTLE, HAWARDEN.

[Valentine, Dundee.



From a Photo. by]

THE ANTE-DRAWING-ROOM, HAWARDEN CASTLE.

[Thurston, Luton.

some of the most sacred privileges of motherhood, and to deprive those little ones confided to their charge of their natural inheritance—a mother's loving care and influence. It makes one's heart ache to contemplate the joyless lot of children whose parents regard them as inconvenient incumbrances; who, being there, must be fed, taught and clothed; and in return for which they are expected to efface themselves as much as possible.

Contrast their pale and wistful faces and shy, uncouth manners, with those who are accustomed to bask in congenial surroundings, conscious that they are regarded with an affection which can never fail them; and that their little efforts to please will not be misunderstood, but will meet with their due reward—a loving parent's approbation.

Just as winter frosts nip delicate flowers, so does a stern, cold manner destroy youthful vitality and engender coldness, distrust and reserve; while the opposite will develop all the better instincts, and help to form characters which are virtuous, steadfast and true, and capable of withstanding the temptations of this most interesting but wicked world.

It is, however, the material rather than the ethical side of a child's life that I wish to touch upon to-day, and the vast importance of cheerful, healthy nurseries will be granted by all those who have given due consideration to this subject. Bright wall papers, interesting pictures, warm draperies, well designed furniture, carefully-arranged flower boxes, and the many artistic touches that only a refined mind and loving hand can give, have a distinct hygienic value and an incalculable influence on youthful minds. Order, form, colour, construction, cleanliness, neatness and a dozen other qualities are thus instinctively acquired, and remain life-long possessions of priceless value.

The time is past, I trust, for ever and aye, when one room has to serve the double purpose of day and night nursery, even for a single child. Neither infant nor adult could thrive under such circumstances, for it absolutely precludes the possibility of a pure atmosphere and thorough ventilation—two of the first essentials if robust health is to be enjoyed. In the ideal nurseries hanging lamps should be substituted for gas, as the former diffuse a pleasant warmth, without vitiating the air, and, if prettily shaded, are much more pleasing objects

to look upon than the most elaborately constructed gas brackets. Where adjoining rooms are used it is advisable that the same scheme of decoration should be employed for each. A three-feet dado carried round the walls, and held in place by a wooden rail—linoleum can be used for the lower portion—and above this a tolerably light sanitary paper, with a pretty floral design. The ceiling should also be papered with a diaper pattern in faint shades of the prevailing tints, and the woodwork painted in good oil colour, finished with varnish, and corresponding with the deepest tone in the wall paper.

The handsome coloured plates issued with the Christmas numbers of newspapers make pretty decorations for the nurseries. After the white margin has been removed the choicest should be pasted at intervals on the walls. Round each there should be a plain band of oil colour, to represent the frame and matching the rest of the paint; then the pictures can be varnished, and will remain for years a source of pleasure and instruction to those who while gazing upon them will acquire their first lessons in art.

There is no better covering for a nursery floor than well-seasoned linoleum, with which the entire surface should be first laid. One of the most effective patterns is that which exactly resembles scagliola, which is composed of irregularly-shaped pieces of stone moulded with cement. A bordered central Kidderminster carpet is the most suitable for this room, and should be entirely of wool (not a mixture of flax and wool), then it can be easily cleaned, changed and turned to insure equality of wear.

Washing draperies are also preferable to any others, and for this purpose either a good lined chintz or reversible cretonne should be chosen, and this fabric can also be used for table-covers, if made with a moderately deep frill.

Those who have had the charge of children will appreciate a small stove, with oven and boiler, in the day nursery, protected by a woven wire guard, shaped in such a manner that it entirely covers the fire-place, and fastened securely at the top and sides to the mantelpiece. These are sometimes made with a flap at the top, which folds down for the convenience of the nurse.

A Norwich grate, or slow combustion stove, answers perfectly for the night

nursery, and this also should have its guard, so that all danger of accidents is avoided. The comfort of a fire in both rooms, when the weather is at all cold or damp, cannot be over-estimated, and the trifling cost incurred may save lung and bronchial troubles, those ever-present dangers for which we have to thank our uncertain climate and the bitter east winds which blow across the British Islands at such frequent intervals.

There should be a certain amount of fitted furniture. Ample hanging and other cupboards, window seats in box form, or with sliding doors in front to convert them into receptacles for toys or boots; bookshelves in corners or recesses, and other contrivances of a useful or decorative character; and each window must have fixed bars, partially concealed by pretty flower-boxes, filled with growing plants or evergreens.

A south or south-west aspect affords sufficient sunshine, and where it is possible the day nursery should have a cheerful view. The traffic of a busy thoroughfare is a constant source of pleasure to little people, though the advantages are not so apparent to those of larger growth, who naturally crave for rest and quiet "as the years roll on."

Solid, substantial chairs and tables of convenient height must be provided, as well as two or three nicely-cushioned basket lounges and one of the old-fashioned sofas, guiltless of springs and with two upright ends and horse-hair cushions. Such a piece of furniture will be a constant source of pleasure to active children, while those who are delicate will be glad when tired to avail themselves of the advantages it offers as a comfortable resting-place.

Many day nurseries, especially in old-fashioned houses, have a long and short cupboard in the fire-place recesses. The latter, with a little time and trouble expended on it, may be converted into an admirable doll's house. Above and below the shelf a thin wooden partition should be inserted, so as to divide the cupboards into four equal divisions. These should be suitably papered, and the floors covered with linoleum of small design. These rooms can, of course, be furnished to meet the views of the youthful owners, but it is advisable to reserve the two lower ones for dining-room and kitchen; the others may be decorated as bedrooms, nursery or drawing-room. Dainty furniture, com-

posed of brown perforated card, can be bought from any kindergarten warehouse, and various odds and ends and kitchen utensils may be picked up from various sources.

The dolls should have their clothes made to take off and on, and these should be the work of the children, who should also be allowed to wash and get them up. Delightful sets of miniature domestic appliances have been invented by Miss Headdon, who has devoted considerable time and attention to this subject. These include everything required for washing, for laying the cloth, or for cleaning the house, and for the useful lessons they give, deserve a place in every home where there are little people. These may be obtained at the Kindergarten Dépôt, New Oxford Street, W.C. Elder children, during the holidays, are apt to become a nuisance, particularly on wet days, if they have not some means of amusing themselves and each other. Nowhere does hero-worship predominate as much as in the nursery; and if big brothers and sisters will only devote a little of the time which hangs so heavily on their hands to the amusement of the younger members of the family, they will be well repaid for any trouble they may take. Rough drawings of a doll and its clothing can easily be made with the aid of a pencil and pair of scissors; and upon the round bald head can be pasted the pretty faces of little girls cut from fashion plates.

In my childish days a neat little paper box containing Miss Dollie Dimple and her luggage could be bought for a shilling, and was an excellent model to work from; but probably she, with many other pretty and useful toys, has long since been consigned to the dust-heaps of the past, so as to make room for leading novelties. Miss Dimple's outfit was composed entirely of paper so cut out that it slipped over the doll's head. There were dresses for winter and summer, with jackets to match; hats and bonnets for all seasons, under skirts of various hues, and, I fancy, boots and shoes were also included amongst the articles supplied. The amount of pleasure derived by our little ones from the dressing and undressing of such a doll cannot be measured by the cash value expended in the first purchase of these toys.

If children experiment, they can cut any pattern with ease, and derive at the same time a great deal of pleasure from a very innocent pastime.

The old-fashioned rag doll, too, has latterly assumed a variety of grotesque shapes. Black and white babies, cats, Skye terriers and other animals, not to mention a globe which is supposed to combine geographical instruction with a game at ball, can now be obtained from the leading drapers with full instructions for sewing the various parts together. When finished they should be stuffed with bran or sawdust, and seldom fail to please.

Another employment may be found for growing boys and girls in preparing a sitting or work room for their own use. Some unused garret or other apartment is generally available, and when covered with a clean cheap paper is ready to be operated upon. Discarded furniture from other parts of the house is easily covered and renovated. Take, for example, cane chairs in the last stage of decrepitude. These only need the cane cut away and thin pierced wooden seats substituted, which may be bought for sixpence each; after a couple of coats of enamel or some dark stain, they present quite a respectable appearance. The inexpensive rush chairs, to which I have so often referred, may be greatly improved if a simple monogram or other design is carved upon the back before treating them to the oak stain.

Trunks make useful store places and seats, and the feminine portion of the family can generally be cajoled into making loose covers for these of window curtains of cretonne, if a little hand machine is placed at their disposal. Pine planking can be bought for a nominal price, out of which bookshelves can be easily contrived; or well-made egg-boxes, four feet by three feet, set up on end and provided with a couple of shelves and afterwards painted are useful for holding work, tools or any special treasures.

If they have suitable employments and a fair amount of amusement, Pater and Mater familias will cease to groan in spirit at the escapades of their offspring, or compare notes on the undue length of the holidays.

FASHIONS AND FRIPPERIES.

It has been my happy fate on several occasions lately to be the guest of hostesses, wise in their generation, who have availed themselves of that splendid suite of rooms, the Grafton Galleries, Bond Street, W., instead of converting their own houses for the time being, into veri-

table scenes of confusion and despair. If one would entertain with satisfaction to oneself, and with pleasure to those whom we delight to honour, it is a *sine quâ non*, that large parties should be given where there is ample space, and none of that overcrowding which is inevitable in so many London houses, which have been designed with a view to domestic life, rather than for balls, receptions, "At Homes" and similar gatherings, which play so large a part in the



CHILDREN'S EVENING DRESSES.

career of the average woman of fashion.

Many thanks are due to the directors of the Grafton Galleries for providing these handsome apartments, so admirably suited for the purpose, and in so convenient a position: also for offering them for the use of the public for such a very moderate sum. The prices demanded, of course, depend in a large measure upon the class of entertainment given; but it rarely exceeds £50 per night for the three galleries, (whose architectural beauty is enhanced by costly works of art). A splendid banqueting and supper room, elaborately fitted kitchens and service rooms with all the latest appliances, cloak and retiring rooms are included in the suite. The

catering arrangements have been placed in the capable hands of that high priest of epicures, Monsieur Benoit, who has converted cookery into a fine art, and who is as indispensable to the success of a smart entertainment as Monsieur Worth is to the appearance of the guests.

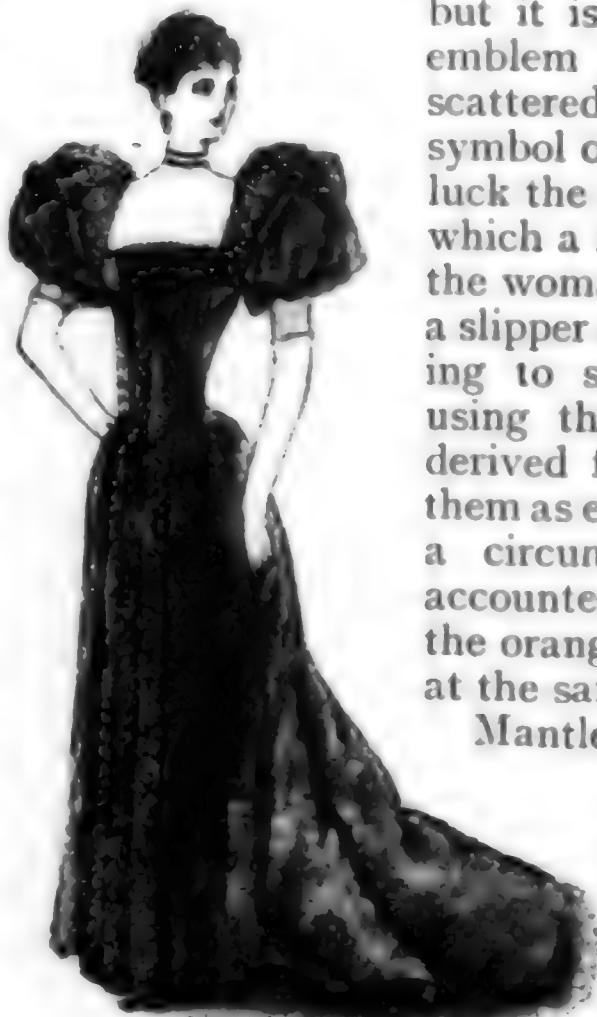
At this season of the year, when all in their degree, are entertaining, or being entertained; and when children require the same careful dressing as their mothers and elder sisters, costumes for evening wear naturally engage our attention.

The tendency in the latest modes is to return to plain skirts and long, straight folds, and those hideous and unbecoming trimmings, that cut up skirts into three portions, which prevailed last autumn, are no longer approved by those who have a reputation to maintain. Nothing could be prettier or more chic than the evening dress of rich gold *satin duchesse*, with epaulettes and drapery of black Chantilly lace and bertha of black velvet.

The children's frocks in the accompanying sketch, of olive green and deep crimson velveteen, relieved with Irish guipure, are sufficiently smart for anything short of a Mansion House Ball, and yet the wearers would run no risk, as is so often the case when diaphanous materials are chosen for the evening, after wearing heavy cloth and woollen fabrics during the earlier hours of the day.

There have been some very stylish weddings in town recently, and at one of the prettiest the youthful bride was attired in a gown of pearl brocade, festooned with Brussels *point*, caught at intervals by trails of orange blossoms. A coronet of these lovely flowers adorned her sunny hair, from which depended the soft folds of the tulle veil, worn off the face and mingling with the plain satin train.

Much uncertainty exists as to why this flower was first used at nuptial ceremonies,



FASHIONABLE EVENING GOWN.

but it is generally believed that it is the emblem of fruitfulness, just as the rice scattered over the newly-married pair is a symbol of plenty, and the shoe thrown for luck the remnant of an ancient custom, in which a father deputed his authority over the woman to the bridegroom by flinging a slipper after the departing bride. According to some authorities, the practice of using these blossoms at weddings was derived from the Saracens, who regarded them as emblems of a prosperous marriage, a circumstance which may partly be accounted for by the fact that in the East the orange tree bears ripe fruit and flowers at the same time.

Mantles also made for this trousseau have been illustrated, as they are good examples of what are being worn just now. The two three-quarter coats are for walking, and the long one is a more elegant garment, appropriate for visiting or ceremonious occasions.

Some minor details are shown in another sketch. The daintiest of fans, irreproachable hosiery, gloves made of well-dressed kid, filmy handkerchiefs, embroidered and lace-trimmed, and the thou-

sand and one little elegancies dear to the feminine mind.

There is just one other trifle intended to add to our comfort which I should like to bring before the notice of the readers of THE LUDGATE MONTHLY. This is an ingenious contrivance for heating those useful appliances and aids to beauty—the curling-irons. Without any additional power, if the electric light is already in the bedroom, this little article can be utilised; and one of its greatest advantages is its perfect cleanliness. I am



A HANDSOME MANTLE.



A SMART COAT.

sure it will soon find a ready sale, for spirit lamps are dangerous, and gas is dirty. My life has been made a burden to me for the last eighteen months by my being compelled to warm my irons at a considerable distance from my sleeping apartment: to speak plainly, on the adjoining corridor, where, *en déshabille*, I have been obliged to encounter, much against my will, various members of my family and others who seem to take a special delight in appearing upon the scene during this delicate operation. At such moments I have sighed in vain for the ideal home of the future, when the most beautiful illuminant in the world shall be employed in a variety of ways for our benefit.*

* The bride's trousseau was made by that well-known firm of milliners and *modistes*, Mesdames Andrews and Wyndham, 107, Bond Street, who kindly provided me with drawings. Gloves, hosiery, and a variety of underclothing were bought from Messrs. Penberthy, 390 and 392, Oxford Street, W. For the children's dresses I am indebted to the clever artist, Gertz (Miss Gertrude Chappel), 22, Somerleyton Road, Brixton, S.W., who specially designed them for THE LUDGATE MONTHLY.

For the sketch of the electric iron-heater I have to thank Messrs. Crompton & Co., 148, Brompton Road, S.W., who make a specialty of electric appliances for domestic use.

"The Drawing-room, Hawarden Castle," is reproduced by permission of the Editor of *The Lady*.



ANOTHER SMART COAT.



ELECTRIC HEATER FOR CURLING TONGS.

Incidents of the Month.

SOCIAL, DRAMATIC AND GOSSIP.

NOTIONS FROM AN EASY-CHAIR.

By JOHN A. STEUART.

THE tardy intervention of the Government has, for the present at least, averted the threatened coal famine. In future disputes it is to be hoped that, for the sake of our industries and our national reputation, more common sense will be shown on both sides—more tact, a more conciliatory spirit, and less determination to stand defiantly upon trifles. Many months must pass ere the trade of England can recover from the shock and dislocation of a strike which, to an unprejudiced outsider, seems as foolish as it was disastrous. On the whole, the men have been the losers; for the owners, selling surplus stocks at enormously advanced rates, more than recouped themselves for idleness or diminished output. The 1st of February must pass before one can speak with any degree of confidence of the work of the Conference presided over by Lord Rosebery; but one trusts that the Board of Conciliation will effect that union of interests in regard to Capital and Labour for which all who have the prosperity of our country at heart must pray. In any event, it will be a good precedent to fall back on in any future trouble that may arise. It is to be regretted, however, that the agreement between masters and men could not have been brought about without Government intervention. The function of Government, I am well aware, is to exercise a paternal care over the welfare of the people. It is its duty to interfere when that welfare is endangered either by menace from without or by bickerings within; and certainly none can say that in the present instance the interference has been unwarranted or premature. Ministers, indeed, were loudly blamed for delay; but the pity is, they should have been called on to meddle at all. It is alien to the British Con-

stitution to have Governments interfering in the private affairs of the people, and in recent times they have been reluctant to interfere. Englishmen boast of their ability to manage their own concerns. Yet during the last few months they have been striving hard to prove their total inability, and more than once the strong arm of the law has been called on to preserve peace.



LORD ROSEBERY.

* * *
The Board of Conciliation will in future try to maintain that just balance between Employer and Employed, between Capital and Labour, which is essential to order and prosperity. In the recent dispute each side has been so selfishly bent (it is well to speak candidly) on considering itself only, that it was blind to the large interests which were being sacrificed in the hot scramble for small ones. That cut-throat policy will, it is to be hoped, be obviated in time to come. There will always indeed be



CONCILIATION OF CAPITAL AND LABOUR.

grumbings and dissatisfaction. In no Utopia that the ingenuity of man could make feasible would perfect contentment and harmony reign; and the object of industrial unions and conferences ought now to be to secure the appointment of a Board or Committee to arbitrate in all trade disputes, and to be so constituted as to have power to enforce its decisions. One thing in particular ought to be borne in mind—there must be compromises where opposing interests clash. The policy of the world is one of give and take, and that policy must continue until we shall have advanced nearer the time when the lion and the lamb shall lie down in peace together. To be arbitrary is fatal even to tyrants; and it must be said that throughout this coal dispute both owners and miners have by turns shown an inclination to be despotic. But economic laws are not to be set aside by bluster or obstinacy; in spite of all that selfishness can achieve, they will make their iron hand felt. There is another point, too, which must not be lost sight of. While owners and miners pursue their game of cross purposes the public suffer, and suffer badly. It is time that he who pays the piper should have the naming of the tune. The victims may well protest against the spirit of unreasonableness shown by the disputants. No class of men, not even colliers and colliery proprietors have a right to inconvenience and plunder the public as has been done lately. And I, for one, hope that in future troubles the Government will promptly demand a settlement in accordance with fairness. That in November people should have to pay a hundred per cent. more for coals than they paid in July is a monstrous injustice, which cannot be repeated with impunity. Months were spent in a ruinous wrangling that might have been ended in a week. We cannot often afford to indulge in the luxury of squandering £30,000,000 in childish petulance and temper.

* * *

As many people are by this time aware, Mr. W. T. Stead has come forward with a brand new scheme for hastening the



MR. W. T. STEAD.
(With Apologies to Mr. Phil May.)

millennium. The movement towards primordial innocence and bliss is to be inaugurated and conducted to a successful issue by *The Daily Paper*, of which Mr. Stead has given full particulars in the October and November numbers of the *Review of Reviews*. It need scarcely be said that Mr. Stead is himself to be the high priest of the new evangel, the St. Francis (more propitious and more potent than he of Assisi) of the Crusade, which is to reform a wicked world and turn misery to unspeakable felicity. The plan Mr. Stead adopts for securing his philanthropic ends is, like all emanations of genius, as simple as it is admirable and ingenious. A hundred thousand subscribers are to take a hundred thousand debentures of £1 each and to pay a year's subscription in advance, and the regeneration of the race is assured. Was ever anything simpler or grander? Mr. Stead is at considerable pains (needlessly, one would imagine) to explain the benefits that will accrue to the lucky ones who secure the debentures and pay the subscriptions in advance. They will have a double pleasure—the pleasure of receiving dividends varying from five to ten per cent., according to the popularity of the new venture, and the pleasure of seeing wickedness driven from the land. If this prospect does not make people “snap up” (the phrase is Mr. Stead's) the proffered debentures, then nothing on earth can move men in their own interests. Debentures and subscriptions will, it is calculated, amount to £130,000, and with this not insignificant sum in hand, Mr. Stead thinks he can



GIVE THE DEVIL A GOOD TUSSELE.

give the devil a good tussle for supremacy in England. I hope so. They say his Satanic majesty is not so bad as he is called: perhaps not, but we have him with us in so many shapes and guises that we should be grateful for his expulsion, even if Mr. Stead were to establish an autocracy on the ruins of the fallen monarchy.

* * *

To descend from generalities to details, I find that Mr. Stead is to do at all times, and under all conceivable circumstances, precisely what seemeth to him good. "No one in the company shall have any right to interfere in any way with the free exercise of his absolute discretion." He is to have the powers of a despot. This is fully provided for in the articles of association, as will appear from two clauses which I quote.

"The said William Thomas Stead shall be the permanent governing director of the company, and, subject as hereinafter provided, he shall hold that office for life, and whilst he holds the same the government and control of the company shall be vested in him."

"The said William Thomas Stead, whilst he holds the office of governing director, may, from time to time, and at any time, appoint any other persons to be directors of the company, and may define, limit, and restrict their powers, and may fix and determine their remuneration and duties, and may at any time remove any director however appointed, and may at any time convene a general meeting of the company. Every such appointment or removal must be in writing under the hand of the said William Thomas Stead."

The said William Thomas Stead, in a word, is to be cock of the walk in a way that must move the envy of other chairmen of companies. The question, "Is Mr. Stead infallible, that he should have absolute control in this fashion?" will naturally occur to one. Has he in the past given such incontrovertible evidence of sound judgment in all matters connected with journalism, that we are to give him £130,000 to do with just as he likes? Might it not happen that subscribers would see their money put to uses of which they could not approve; of which, indeed, they would strongly disapprove? "Everything," says Mr. Stead, naïvely, "depends upon the degree of personal con-

fidence which they have in one." Precisely, Mr. Stead. Personal confidence and personal dominance are the distinguishing characteristics of the enterprise. From the business point of view, we are told, the element of confidence does not come in. One cannot be quite certain of that. Philanthropy has before to-day been made to pay; but can it always be made to yield dividends? Will Mr. Stead's paper catch on? Is there room for it? To redress wrongs, to expose abuses and objectionable habits, to protect and support the defenceless, to promote objects and institutions for the benefit of the public, and to have a fatherly eye over mankind in general, are admirable as philanthropic aims; but I have noticed that the papers which succeed financially are not those which devote their best



energies to works of reform and charity. The *Daily Paper* would doubtless be readable, it may even be expected to be spicy under the direction of Mr. Stead; but readable and spicy papers have failed before now. A desire to regenerate a fallen race does not in every instance imply the ability to do it; nor is success in that laudable object a guarantee of dividends on the capital invested in the enterprise. I shall await the outcome of Mr. Stead's scheme with interest.

* * *

I have long been convinced that there is no more instructive or entertaining reading than the advertisement columns of the daily newspapers. They mirror, as it were, the hopes, the joys, the fears, the aspirations, the conceits, the virtues and vices, the prosperity and poverty, the

luxuries and wretchedness of the great human family; and are, therefore, full of the varied interests of tragedy, comedy, farce, romance, novel, epic, history, and philosophy. For the payment of a small sum the glorious Fourth Estate permits the philanthropist, the man of business, the man of science and of letters, the quack and humbug, the needy and the affluent to tout their several horns in their own way. The result is sometimes curious, and, not infrequently, a striking object lesson in moral education. For "ways that are queer and tricks that are vain" are not by any means confined to the heathen Chinese. Indeed, the ways of devout Christians are often so astonishing that one wonders what kind of a place their Heaven is likely to be. The other day I came across an advertisement that seemed to me peculiarly typical of the age in which we have the honour to live. It offered a "gentleman" with influence enough among moneyed people to induce them to invest in certain "gilt-edged" stocks an income that many a hard-working professional man would regard as princely. It was brief and to the point; no circumlocutions were indulged in; there was no veiling of facts as if the advertiser were half ashamed of himself. Not at all. On the contrary, there was the assurance of one who is sure of himself and of his object.

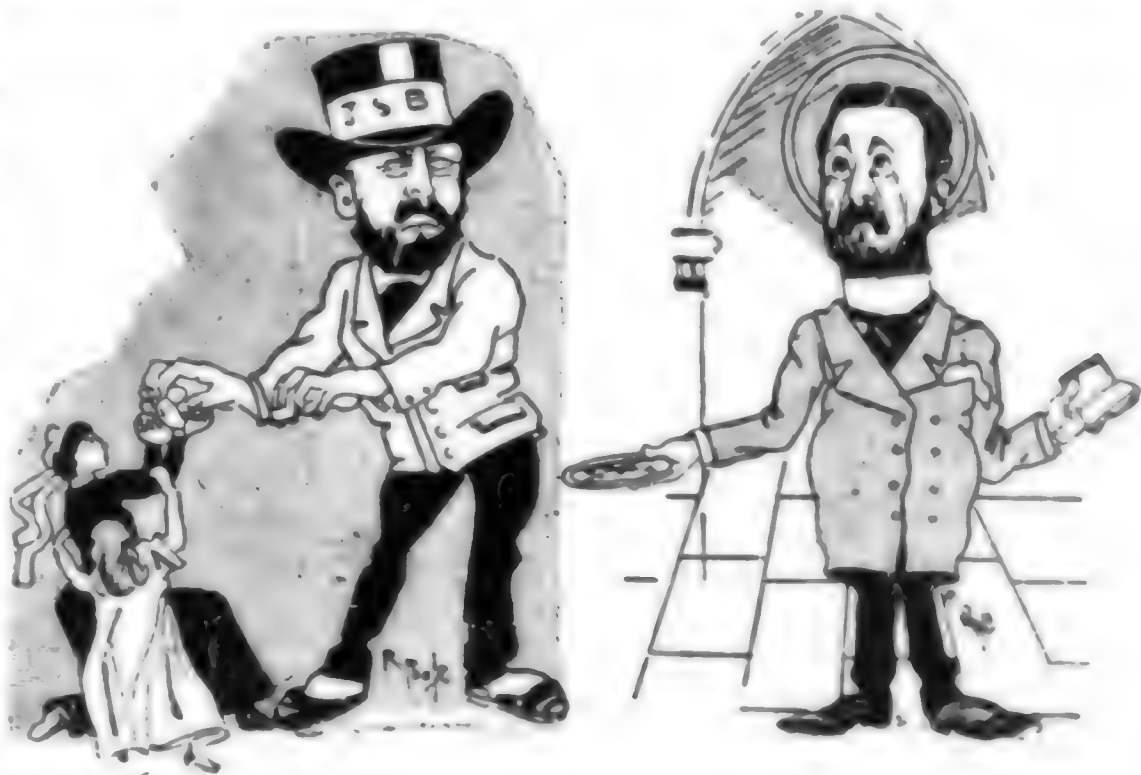
* * *

Now here is a pretty little study in morals. A GENTLEMAN (the whole word in capitals, please) who can wheedle his associates into speculating, that being the euphemistic phrase for gambling in the city, who can play the jackal to a lion couching majestically in the background, can secure a handsome income and have a fine time of it. I wonder how many gentlemen offered their gentlemanly services to the dealer in "gilt-edged" stocks and shares. Did men who draw long pharisaical faces at the sins of their fellows and go three times to church on Sunday apply for the enviable post of stockbroker's tout? Did pious heads of families, supporters of charities, Superintendents of Young Men's Christian Associations?

Whoever applied or did not apply, the advertisement is so good an indication of the spirit of the times that it well deserves the attention of the historian. I respectfully recommend it to Mr. Froude and Mr. Lecky.

* * *

Mr. Stevenson must really be more careful. He ought to know by this time that a joke is a dangerous thing, liable to be misunderstood and to get the joker into trouble. The author of "Kidnapped," lately made a holiday trip to Honolulu, and, being in a festive mood one evening at a social gathering, made some remarks upon Scottish history, which were not, it must be owned, strictly orthodox. That, perhaps, was their principal charm; for orthodoxy, though generally respectable, is not invariably interesting. It belongs to the eminent and excellent things that have a tendency to make men yawn. So Mr. Stevenson, being a novelist and well aware of man's desire for novelty, attempted a diversion in matters historical. He had the temerity to allege, among other heterodox things, that Scottish history is one "long brawl;" that Mary Queen of Scots, in spite of many foibles, "was rather a good fellow," and that the Covenanters, though capable of dying in an interesting manner, were not the people to appeal to the sympathy and imagination. For these heresies he has been furiously hauled over the coals. His compatriots declare they are ashamed of him (a dreadful evidence of disgrace), and the fighting editor of the *London Scotsman* has chastised him with scorpions in a leader of over two columns in length. A reputable son of Scotia once



SATURDAY.

SUNDAY.

acknowledged that he "joked wi' great deefeculty," and everybody remembers the mention that that arch wag the Reverend Sydney Smith made of a surgical operation in referring to Scotsmen's sense of humour. The Scotch have humour, abundance of it. Mr. Swinburne has called Carlyle the profoundest humourist of the



THE FIGHTING EDITOR.

century, and readers in general have long since made up their minds about the humour of Burns and Scott. Yet there seem to be times when the Scottish apprehension of fun is dull. Mr. Stevenson makes a jest in Honolulu, and forthwith Scotland rings with angry denunciation. It is enough to make Sydney Smith chuckle in his grave.

* * *

Eheu! Ye gods, how I pant! My fatigue is not to be ascribed to any excessive physical exertion, but merely to the fact that I have been overtaken by a deluge of Christmas literature, and have not yet recovered my breath or my customary composure. I hope to be presently myself again, however, and then, doubtless, there will be vivid and abiding memories of my experiences. For the moment my mental atmosphere is rather hazy, like that of a man who is gently getting over the effects of a shock. Christmas literature, as everybody knows, or ought to know, is often attractive, oftener still thrilling, and at times depressing. The Christmas tale used to be one of great domestic interest, varied by the

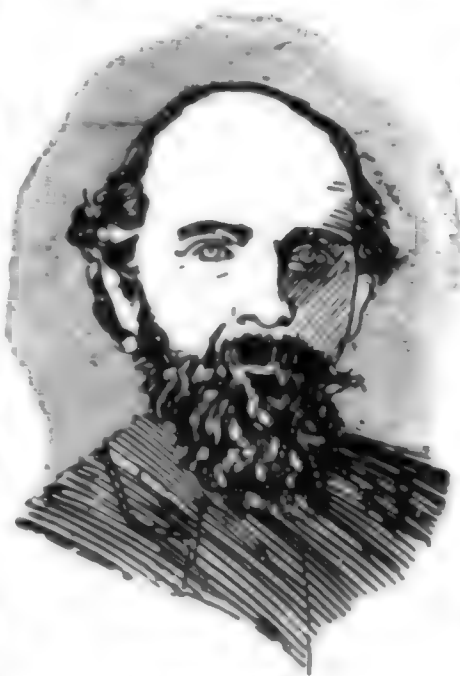
occasional incursions of ghosts and fairies. *Mais nous avons changé tout cela.* A robust age demands more stimulating fare, and now the regulation reading for the merry season is chiefly concerned with shipwrecks, battles, bloodshed, sanguinary savages and adventures by flood and field that make one's scalp rise in horror. "The Cricket on the Hearth" or "Mrs. Perkins's Ball" is not to the taste of the present generation, and assuredly the present generation finds caterers in plenty who are in nowise animated by the spirit of Thackeray or Dickens. There is Mr. George A. Henty, for example, a most industrious manufacturer of stories that are warranted to make the spine quiver; there is also the indefatigable Mr. G. M. Fenn, equally curdling and no less



CARLYLE.

voluminous; there is Mr. Rider Haggard, the Homer of these latter days, who butchers barbarians with an expedition never equalled in his maddest feats by the elder Homer; there is Mr. R. M. Ballantyne, conscientious and successful as any of his brethren, and there are many more

valourously aiding these in making the flesh of young people creep. The increasing bloodthirstiness of the modern tale of adventure is a notable characteristic of the time. "Robinson Crusoe" and "Gulliver" are tame in comparison with their successors. Matthew Arnold, a Greek out of place, was always insisting on the necessity of bringing more of the placidity and sanity which distinguished the ancient writers into modern literature. But he was a preacher in the



SWINBURNE.

wilderness. The qualities he commended with so much charm and grace are conspicuous to-day by their absence. Our era has other ideals, and follows them as if Plato were a myth and Arnold a humbug. It is to be feared that in his Christmas literature honest John Bull is hopelessly addicted to gore.

* * *

Yet the statement must be made with some qualification. There are writers who do not aim at sensation, more sensation and ever more sensation, and yet are highly successful. "Little Lord Fauntleroy," one of the most charming children's books ever written, contains scarcely one exciting incident; and Mrs. Burnett's latest book, "The One I Knew the Best of All" (Warne and Co.), is as quiet and almost as delightful. It is the autobiography of the talented authoress herself as a little girl, and in its insight and sympathy must be pronounced a wonderful study of a childish mind. It will hardly be so popular in the nursery as the earlier book, but will appeal more to adults who like to recall the uninterpreted thoughts and imaginations of childhood. Mrs. Burnett, unlike most authors who write of and for children, has a style. She writes with grace and point; the humour, like a perpetual ripple of sunshine, is ever present to brighten without being obtrusive, and there is just that touch of sentiment in her writings which gives relish and reality to fictitious narrative. Mr. Henry M. Stanley is also among the prophets, and acquits himself admirably in his unaccustomed rôle. His new book "My Dark Companions and their Strange Stories" (Sampson Low, Marston and Co.) will be interesting, not only to those who find amusement in fables and tales of magic, but also to students of folk-lore. The "Strange Stories" are not the inventions of Mr. Stanley, but were recited to him around the evening camp fire during his fifteen years' wanderings in Africa. "My Dark Companions" illustrates once again how nearly the fables of all countries agree and how similar in mind and imagination are the untutored children of Africa and our own primitive forefathers. I gladly welcome a new book by "Q," who is known among his friends as Mr. A. T. Quiller Couch. Mr. Couch is one of the few—too few—English authors who have unravelled the mystery of the short story. They order these things better

in France and likewise in America. But we are beginning to order them fairly well in England also, as Mr. Couch's volume, "The Delectable Duchy" (Cassell and Co.), proves. The book is not without its racial weakness and the defect of imitation. Mr. Couch is evidently an ardent student of both Mr. Hardy and Mr. Stevenson; at any rate, his work is too often an echo, now of the one, now of the other, and there are times when he seems to hesitate between his models. But happily there are other times when he forgets them, and then he is strong and fresh and fascinating. "The Delectable Duchy" is, on the whole, a delectable book, written in fluent, expressive English, and evincing no little power and originality.

J. A. S.

D R A M A T I C N O T E S .

BY FITZGERALD ARTHUR.

1893 has not been a particularly brilliant or successful year dramatically speaking. In the beginning of the year, fogs and influenza helped to thin the stalls and circles of the various playhouses; and, later, the coal-strike, prolonged until it became nearly a national calamity, played sad havoc with the various treasuries, more particularly those of our provincial houses. Still, many pieces have been produced that should never have seen the light of day; others were produced, but being badly cast, failed to justify the hopes entertained of them. Mr. Clement Scott, having returned from his tour round the world, entered the arena of dramatic criticism once more and stirred things up right merrily; first of all, he roundly accused one of our leading playwrights of deliberate plagiarism; and it took all the persuasive powers of that eminent and astute gentleman, Sir George Lewis, to arrange matters amicably. Mr. Scott having done this, then thought he would be more general and set to work to go for authors in a more or less indiscriminate fashion, and raised a shiboleth about "the stage for the people," and though he wrote a great deal and gave lectures, no one but he himself has yet been able to grasp his idea. My idea of "the stage for the people" is, put up a good piece and it will draw, be it humorous or pathetic; be it heavy tragedy or light comedy. "The people" do not want to be dictated to; they will

show their appreciation or disapproval of a piece fast enough without Mr. Scott or anyone else undertaking to cater for them.

Perhaps the two productions of the year just closed have been "Becket," at the Lyceum, and "Sowing the Wind," at the Comedy. Of course, the renewal of "Diplomacy" at the Garrick, bringing with it the return of the Bancrofts to the stage, is also a notable fact.

The Haymarket has tried "Hypatia," "A Woman of no Importance" and the "Tempter," and none of them have been unqualified successes. Artistically, "Hypatia" certainly was one. The second-hand platitudes and smart society sayings, badly strung together, of Mr. Oscar Wilde's "A Woman of no Importance" had but a moderate run, and the "Tempter" had also to succumb to the inevitable—lack of support. "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," at the St. James's, did somewhat better. The Savoy, having commenced the year with "Haddon Hall," returned to its first loves, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, and closed the year with "Utopia, Limited," in the height of its success. The Adelphi, having tried its luck with the "Black Domino," turned on Mr. Henry Pettitt's "A Woman's Revenge," and closed the year with this drama going strong and well. A great deal of this is due to the strengthening of the cast, particularly in bringing in Miss Mary Rorke to play the part of the heroine, vice Miss Elizabeth Robins retired. Miss Rorke carried scene after scene with her, where Miss Robins failed to obtain the sympathies of her audience. The Court has given us one or two good pieces, notably the "Amazons" and "The Other Fellow," and has now a triple bill once more running, and when I say that Mr. Seymour Hicks is responsible for the first item of the two, and Mr. Charles Brookfield for the last, it is sufficient to guarantee their merit and worth.

"Morocco Bound," at

the Shaftesbury, has decidedly caught on, having but a few weeks ago celebrated its 200th birthday, and later on brought out its second edition.

The Vaudeville, after several attempts, managed to produce a good, laughable piece in "A Screw Loose." Here, from a very simple plot, very many mirthful situations are evolved. Lady Alladay, wife of an English baronet, has a married sister, one Mrs. Strummit, in America; her brother-in-law meets with a railway accident, and suffering from the shock, imagines that his wife has been killed, his own head knocked off, and somebody else's put on by the stupidity of the doctors. Mr. Strummit is sent home to Lady Alladay to be placed under the care of the most eminent mental physician we can boast, and his arrival is the signal for the fun to commence. The keeper engaged to look after the demented one on this side of the water, one Major Abbott, is mistaken by Lady Alladay for her brother-in-law, and the real Simon Pure is the supposed keeper. The doctor, on arriving, mistakes the American attendant, who brought Mr. Strummit over, for his charge; another eminent doctor who is

called in, falls into the error that Sir Willifer Alladay is the poor misguided creature, and has him gently, but forcibly removed and placed in a padded cell. Ultimately everything rights itself, the clouded and depressed brain returns to its normal condition, and all ends well. Mr. Mark Melford, the author of this farcical comedy, enacts the part of Henry Strummit, the cracked one, himself, and naturally gives those touches to it that the author wants. Miss Gertrude Kingston, as Lady Alladay, has very little to do save to wear pretty gowns and look handsome, both of which she succeeds in doing to the satisfaction of all. Mr. Fred Thorne and Mr. Albert Bernard are the two old doctors—the one believing in the magnetic



MISS GERTRUDE KINGSTON.
[Frank Dickens.]



MISS ETHEL WARING.

power of the eye, the other in the more practical power of padded cells and strait jackets. The make-up of Mr. Bernard as Dr. Pottle is excellent. Mr. Chas. Hudson, as the American attendant, Peckham, makes every line of a small part stand out, and succeeds in making it, therefore, an important part. The Constable Hodges of Mr. Hargreaves is very amusing, his "What for?" being irritating to everyone he comes in contact with. Miss Alice De Winton as Mrs. Strummit the wife of the lunatic, has but a small part in the story; we wish she had more.

The success and the surprise of the piece was Mr. W. L. Abingdon, long associated with the villainy of Adelphi and Princess's melodrama. That he has blossomed forth as the lightest of light comedians is now old history, and that he scored a decided success is a thing of the past. Mr. John Hare, appreciating this success on Mr. Abingdon's part, has promptly engaged him for the new production at the Garrick, which should be

due about the time these lines appear in print. From the Adelphi villain to the Garrick light comedian is a very long stride, and goes to show the versatility of the subject of this notice. Two other very excellent actors also join Mr. Hare at the same time—Mr. H. De Lange and Mr. G. W. Anson. The latter, I hear, has one scene in which he hopes to score heavily.

"The Best Man Wins," the curtain raiser at the Vaudeville, is better than the ordinary run of such pieces, and enables Mr. Fred Thorne to give one of his inimitable impersonations of a country yokel, and also permits Miss Ethel Waring to distinguish herself as Charlotte Kairns, the beloved of both Perks and Jopper, but who ultimately marries Parson Yeulett.

The management have shown their good sense in thus looking after the interests of the early comers, and they have further added to their comfort by providing good music and an excellent orchestra, under the bâton of that talented young musician, Mr. Arthur Godfrey.

Toole's Theatre has been filled for the best part of the year with "Walker, London," Mr. J. L. Toole being in the title rôle. Lately, "Mrs. Othello," an adaptation from the French, by the late Fred Leslie and Arthur Shirley, has been drawing good houses. The piece is of the farcical comedy type, is exceedingly funny, is well cast and well acted, having

such well-known people as Miss Fanny Brough, Miss Cicely Richards, Miss Blanche Horlock, Mr. William H. Day, Mr. Percy Marshall, and last, but not least, Mr. Charles Glenney, in the bill. Of course, Miss Fanny Brough is the "Mrs. Othello," or to stick to the words of the programme, Mrs. Robert Blackmore, the jealous and suspicious wife of Robert Blackmore, the tame married—very much married—man, as played by Mr. Charles Glenney. Mr. Glenney, as the tame husband, who is always getting into scrapes, through no fault of his own, but who is led into them by his

MR. MARK MELFORD.
Photo. by Barrett, Southampton.

friend Gyle, who is a bit of a wild one, or his friend Ozmond Tippler, is, as he ever is, excellent; and while Mr. Glenney is on the stage, mirth and hilarity reign supreme. Mr. W. H. Day, as Tippler, is no better than he ought to be. As a solicitor, instead of advising his clients, he leads them into scrapes, and then allows them to get out the best way they can, which, to say the least of it, is not the right thing to do. However, as he is only playing the stage solicitor, too much fault must not be found with him, more particularly as what he does he does well. Miss Cicely Richards as Eliza (Blackmore's servant) gives one of those nice little sketches with which all her admirers are so familiar. Mr. Julian Cross as Titan Hercules has a nasty way of smashing doors and fenders, pokers and fire-irons, and then coolly asking you to send the bill in to him. He being the strong man, naturally his wife is but a poor weakling, who has a most annoying way of fainting at most inconvenient times; and when you are expecting the strong man husband, who is a martyr to the pangs of jealousy, momentarily to arrive, to be holding his wife, who has gone off into a swoon, in your arms, is, to say the least, most embarrassing.

The Criterion has given us one good play during the year that is gone in the "Bauble Shop," and admirably acted it: was by Mr. Charles Wyndham, Miss Mary Moore, Mr. Valentine, Mr. Blakely, Mr. W. H. Day and Mr. Frank Worthing; since then, "Madame Angot" and "Madame Favart" have held the boards and proved that these charming old tuneful comic operas still have the power to fill the house. Of burlesques there have been any number; but with the exception of "Morocco Bound," none call for much comment. In nearly every one of them one particular star is the attraction, and as long as he or she fills the house we are told that the burlesque in question is a great success, though it may be, as it often

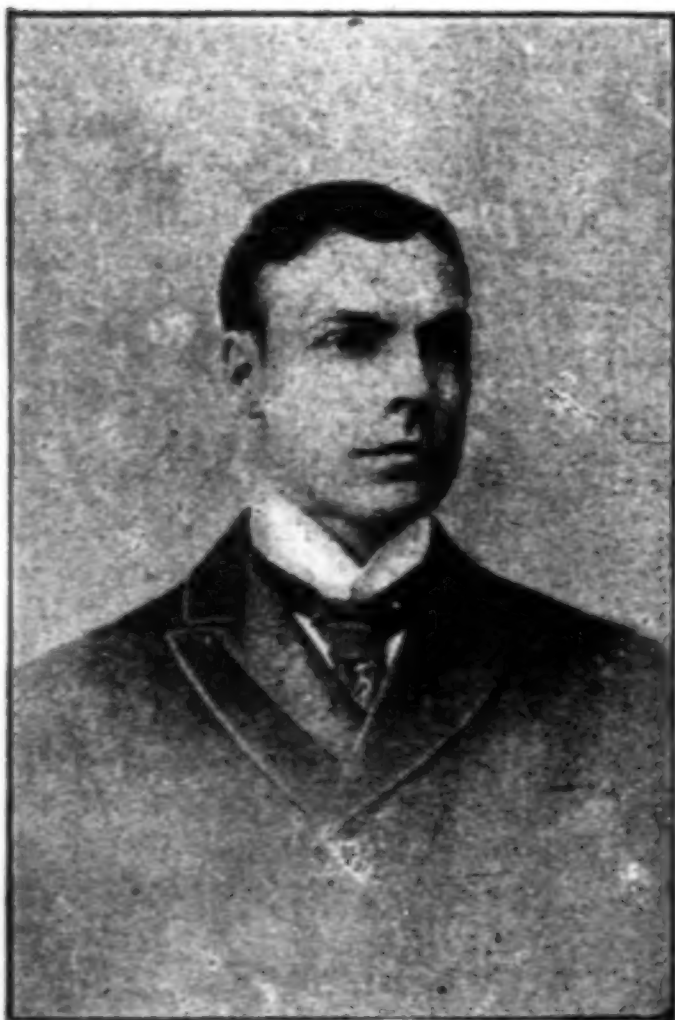


Photo. by] MR. W. L. ABINGDON. [Alfred Ellis.

is, nothing but utter drivel and incoherent nonsense. Oh for the days of H. J. Byron and his burlesque on the "Lady of Lyons!" We don't get such now. Talking of burlesques, of course, it goes without saying, that poor Fred Leslie and Nellie Farren were *the* two best we have had for many days; now one has left us and the other has retired, and it behoves managers to look round for their successors. It has more than once struck me that Miss May Yohe and Mr. Arthur Roberts would make such a pair. I give this to Mr. George Edwardes for what it is

worth, free gratis and for nothing.

Pantomime is in full swing, and once more Drury Lane rings with the merry laughter of happy children and their older escorts. At the Lyceum "Cinderella" is the *pièce de résistance*. Fancy "Cinderella" in two parts, with an interval of fifteen minutes for refreshments. "Cinderella" without a procession! Yet, to make up for this, we have Miss Ellaline Terriss,



Photo. by W. and D. Downey.

making as pretty and charming a Cinderella as one could wish for, and making us say it was no wonder that the prince fell in love with her. How could he have helped it if the original Cinderella was like unto this one shown us in the year of grace 1894?

The attraction now, and for many months to come, is Constantinople at Olympia. Nothing that money could buy, or human ingenuity invent, has been spared to make this colossal and truly wonderful show a success.

Months of labour prior to its opening have been expended on its preparation; the best artists from all parts of the globe have been employed to bring their skilled labour to bear, each on his own special department, to render the whole one harmonious spectacle. The guide book, even, is a thing of beauty, and not only is it ornamental, but it is also useful. Everyone who goes there takes the "caique"—I had nearly written cake—he must do so if he wants to see the hall of a thousand pillars. Look at the galaxy of beauty that is gathered on the stage at one time—some two thousand. Look at the number that can be and are accommodated

at each performance—upwards of ten thousand. One can spend hours at Constantinople, and then come away without having seen one half of the attractions. Side shows are there innumerable. Shops and stalls are dotted here and there, where pretty Turkish ladies use all their Eastern blandishments to persuade you to patronise their wares. You must do it. The promenades are as handsome and picturesque as anything that has ever been seen in London. Fancy all this for one shilling! Is it any wonder that all London is flocking thither, and that all Britain will do so in time?

I have no doubt when this time next year I have to review the twelve months now started, I shall be able to say, Constantinople is going as strong as ever. I hope later to give my country readers some sketches of Constantinople. Let us hope, also, that when that time comes I may be able to add that we have had a prosperous year, and that the dramatic, the music hall, and the other entertaining professions have done well—have amused and enlightened the public, and raised still higher the glory and good name of the English Stage.

MELLIN'S FOOD

FOR INFANTS AND INVALIDS.



Newcastle, Staffordshire,
December 12th, 1892.

Dear Mr. MELLIN,

I enclose you photo of my boy, Malcolm, taken when he was 6 months old. When he was 7 months he weighed 24 lb.; he is now 11 months old, and has 8 teeth; he has taken your Food entirely since he was a week old.

I have brought up two girls also on the Food, who are now aged 10 years and 12 years respectively. I consider there is no Food like it for children.

Yours truly,
E. TURNER.

MELLIN'S EMULSION

OF COD LIVER OIL

**CURES COUGHS, COLDS, BRONCHITIS, &c.
FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS.**

Price 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d. per Bottle. Sample size, 1s. Of all Chemists and Stores.

AN ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET ON THE FEEDING AND REARING OF INFANTS:
A Practical and Simple Treatise for Mothers. Containing a large number of Portraits of Healthy and Beautiful Children, together with Facsimiles of Original Testimonials, which are of the greatest interest to all mothers, to be had, with samples, free by post on application to

MELLIN'S FOOD WORKS, Stafford Street, PECKHAM, S.E.

❖ Puzzledom ❖

85. A Charade.

My whole's a word of letters five, I'm found both far and near;
 Behead me, and I am a sound that strikes upon the ear.
 My tail cut off, a weight now comes, most useful to mankind;
 Behead again, my tail replace, a unit you will find.
 Curtail once more and I am left, a very little word,
 A preposition sometimes found, an adverb often heard.
 Behead me now, my tail clap on, and then I think you'll find
 That I abound in man and beast and also in mankind.

86. A lady was asked what relation a certain gentleman was to her. She replied, "That gentleman's mother is my mother's only child." What was the gentleman's relationship to the lady?

87. The following letters form a well-known proverb:—

c e e e e e f h h i i i i m n n n n o o o r s s s t t t t v y.

88. What is that which the more you take from it the larger it grows?

89. Why is a watch-dog larger at night than he is by day?

90. Which is the best way to prevent water coming into your house?

91. What is the difference between a baby and a seagull?

Five Prizes of Three-Volume Novels, cloth bound, will be awarded to the First Five Competitors sending in correct or most correct answers by 20th January. Competitions should be addressed "January Puzzles," THE LUDGATE MONTHLY, 53, Fleet Street, London, E.C. Post cards only, please.

ANSWERS TO DECEMBER PUZZLES.

78. *Color.*

Olive.

Linen.

Overt.

Rents.

79. *Procrastination is the thief of time.*

80. *The letter V.*

81. *Because he always looks down in the mouth.*

82. *A farmer's pretty daughter.*

83. *O. I. C. U.*

84. *Because it always has its back up.*

The following are the names and addresses of the five winners in Puzzledom in our November Number, to whom the Three-Volume Novels have been sent:—Miss E. Macalister, "Torrisdale," Madingley Road, Cambridge; J. M. Pulford, "Ravensdale," Tunbridge Wells; E. Seymour, Effingham Vicarage, Leatherhead; Miss Vaux, Kintrora Lodge, Thurlow Park Road, West Norwood; W. C. Whitteaker, Aldham Rectory, Hadleigh, Suffolk.